

ATTACKING CHESS

THE KING'S INDIAN VOLUME 2



DAVID VIGORITO

EVERYMAN CHESS

ATTACKING CHESS
KING'S INDIAN VOLUME 2

DAVID VIGORITO

EVERYMAN CHESS
www.everymanchess.com

First published in 2011 by Gloucester Publishers plc (formerly Everyman Publishers plc), Northburgh House, 10 Northburgh Street, London EC1V 0AT

Copyright © 2011 David Vigorito

The right of David Vigorito to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with the Copyrights, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, electrostatic, magnetic tape, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of the publisher.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: 978 1 85744 664 7

Distributed in North America by The Globe Pequot Press, P.O Box 480,
246 Goose Lane, Guilford, CT 06437-0480.

All other sales enquiries should be directed to Everyman Chess, Northburgh House,
10 Northburgh Street, London EC1V 0AT
tel: 020 7253 7887 fax: 020 7490 3708
email: info@everymanchess.com; website: www.everymanchess.com

Everyman is the registered trade mark of Random House Inc. and is used in this work under licence from Random House Inc.

This book is dedicated to my wife Heather, for her love and support, and most of all her patience; and for Zoe, the baby, for being the best little munchkin ever!

Everyman Chess Series

Chief advisor: Byron Jacobs

Commissioning editor: John Emms

Assistant editor: Richard Palliser

Typeset and edited by First Rank Publishing, Brighton.

Cover design by Horatio Monteverde.

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays, Bungay, Suffolk.

Contents

Bibliography	5
Introduction	7

Part I: The Fianchetto Variation

**1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗f3 ♙g7 4 g3 0-0 5 ♚g2 d6
6 0-0 ♜c6**

1	Yugoslav Variation: 7 ♜c3 a6 8 d5 ♗a5	11
2	Panno Variation: 7 ♜c3 a6 8 h3 ♜b8 9 e4	42
3	Panno Variation: 7 ♜c3 a6 8 h3 Others	63
4	Panno Variation: 7 ♜c3 a6 8 b3	86
5	Panno Variation: White's Other 8th Moves	104

Part II: The Four Pawns Attack

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♜c3 ♙g7 4 e4 d6 5 f4 0-0 6 ♗f3 c5

6	Four Pawns Attack, Main Line: 6...c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 cxd5	154
7	Four Pawns Attack: Other Lines	176

Part III: The Averbakh Variation 5 ♙e2 0-0 6 ♙g5

8	Averbakh Variation: 6...c5 7 d5 h6	207
9	Averbakh Variation: Other Lines	239

Part IV: h3 Lines

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 10 | Makogonov Variation: 5 ♖f3 0-0 6 h3 | 256 |
| 11 | Other h3 Lines: 5 h3 0-0 6 ♗e3 and 6 ♗g5 | 281 |

Part V: Other Lines

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|-----|
| 12 | Seirawan Variation: 5 ♗d3 | 296 |
| 13 | Hungarian Variation: 5 ♖ge2 | 321 |
| 14 | Smyslov Variation: 4 ♖f3 ♗g7 5 ♗g5 | 331 |
| 15 | Odds and Ends | 343 |
| | Index of Variations | 363 |

Bibliography

Books

- Beat the KID*, Jan Markos (Quality Chess 2009)
- Beating the Fianchetto Defences*, Efstratios Grivas (Gambit 2006)
- Beating the King's Indian and Benoni*, Anatoly Vaisser (Batsford 2000)
- Beating the King's Indian and Grünfeld*, Timothy Taylor (Everyman Chess 2006)
- Chess Duels: My Games with the World Champions*, Yasser Seirawan (Everyman Chess 2010)
- Dangerous Weapons: The King's Indian*, Richard Palliser, Glenn Flear & Yelena Dembo (Everyman Chess 2009)
- Easy Guide to the King's Indian*, Gyozo Forintos & Ervin Haag (Everyman Chess 2000)
- Fighting the Anti-King's Indians*, Yelena Dembo (Everyman Chess 2008)
- Grandmaster Repertoire 2: 1 d4 Volume Two*, Boris Avrukh (Quality Chess 2010)
- Kill KID 1*, Semko Semkov (Chess Stars 2009)
- King's Indian & Grünfeld: Fianchetto Lines*, Lasha Janjgava (Gambit 2003)
- King's Indian Defence: Averbakh Variation*, Margeir Petursson (Cadogan 1996)
- Offbeat King's Indian*, Krzysztof Panczyk and Jacek Ilczuk (Everyman Chess 2004)
- Play the King's Indian*, Joe Gallagher (Everyman Chess 2004)
- Revolutionize Your Chess*, Viktor Moskalenko (New in Chess 2009)
- Starting Out: The King's Indian*, Joe Gallagher (Everyman Chess 2002)
- The Art of the King's Indian*, Eduard Gufeld (Batsford 2002)
- The Fearsome Four Pawns Attack*, Jerzy Konikowski & Mark Soszynski (Russell Enterprises 2005)
- The Fianchetto King's Indian*, Colin McNab (Batsford 1996)
- The King's Indian: A Complete Black Repertoire*, Victor Bologan (Chess Stars 2009)
- Understanding the King's Indian*, Mikhail Golubev (Gambit 2005)
- Winning With the King's Indian*, Eduard Gufeld (Macmillan 1991)
- Winning With the King's Indian*, Andrew Martin (Caissa 1989)

Attacking Chess: The King's Indian, Volume 2

Periodicals

Chess Informant through Volume 108

New In Chess Magazine through issue 2010/8

New In Chess Yearbook through Volume 98

Electronic Resources

Mega Database 2010 (ChessBase)

ChessBase.com

ChessPublishing.com

Chess Today

Chess Vibes Openings

The Week in Chess through issue 858

Introduction

The King's Indian Defence is one of the richest openings in all of chess theory. Black does not play to equalize as he does in the classical defences. Rather he seeks to unbalance the game from the outset. The last decade has seen a revitalization of the King's Indian, as even top players are often trying to win with the black pieces. Compared to the classical openings, the price of each move is quite high and a mistake by either side can easily lead to disaster.

The King's Indian has always been considered a somewhat risky opening, but despite that common sentiment, the King's Indian has an impressive pedigree. While this dynamic system was pioneered in the 1950s by Russian and Yugoslav players such as David Bronstein, Efim Geller and Svetozar Gligoric, the two big names that are often attached to the King's Indian are those of its World Champion practitioners, Robert Fischer and Garry Kasparov. Whereas Fischer's retirement signalled the end of his King's Indian era, Kasparov gave up our favourite opening while he was still an active player, which 'indicated' its unsoundness. At least that was the general feeling after he lost a well-known game in 1997 to Kramnik in the then dreaded 'Bayonet' system.

In fact Kasparov stated something to the effect that the Sicilian and King's Indian were too much to keep up with at the level he was playing at, and so he stuck with the Sicilian while heading for more solid systems in the closed openings. Nowadays young players are not so worried about this; with advances in technology many modern talents play both the Sicilian and the King's Indian, as well as other sharp defences.

Opening fashions come and go. The beginning of the new millennium brought forward a great new champion of the King's Indian Defence in Teimour Radjabov. Like Kasparov, Radjabov hails from the city of Baku in Azerbaijan. Radjabov really took over where Kasparov left off, even scoring well in the aforementioned Bayonet (see Chapters 5 and 6 of Volume I). Radjabov's success influenced the younger generation as well as the old guard and nowadays most of the top players have been found at one time or another on the black side of the King's Indian.

The King's Indian Defence has always been an opening I've felt greatly attached to. Despite the fact that I have written extensively on the Slav Defences, the King's Indian was my first real defence to 1 d4. While the King's Indian is considered to be a 'tactical' opening, I have always considered it to be very strategic in nature. It is an opening where a feeling for piece placement and pawn structure is very important. There are many thematic ideas and although the opening lends itself to frequent complications, the tactics have always seemed 'logical' to me. So, while it is true that when I 'grew up' I began to rely more on the solid Slav systems, it is always useful to have a sharp weapon available, especially when one really wants to try to win with Black.

Even though the King's Indian is a complicated opening, I do not think it is so difficult to learn. For one thing, it is relatively 'move order proof'. That is, the King's Indian set-up can be employed against 1 d4, 1 c4, or 1 ♘f3. Also, the King's Indian lends itself to just a handful of pawn structures, so the ideas are easier to assimilate.

Volume II

In this book I cover all of the lines not examined in Volume I. Essentially this is absolutely everything other than the Classical and Sämisch Variations. The most important of these is undoubtedly the Fianchetto Variation. For this book it was very easy for me to decide which line to give, but in the 20+ years leading up to the writing of this volume, it was not such a clear choice.

For many years I played the Kavalek Variation with 6...c6 7 ♘c3 ♖a5. This was advocated in Andrew Martin's 1989 book *Winning With the King's Indian*. The Kavalek was an easy system to learn and I did quite well with it. Eventually I turned to the related classical lines with 6...♗bd7 7 ♘c3 e5 8 e4 c6 9 h3 ♖a5. While both of these systems remain playable, eventually I found enough little problems with them that I became discouraged and I looked in other directions.

I had always been attracted to the 'look' of 6...♗c6, but I could not find much written material advocating these lines for Black. In fact most of what I found claimed that the Yugoslav Variation with 7 ♘c3 a6 8 d5 ♗a5 9 ♗d2 c5 favoured White. Despite the lack of a good repertoire book for Black I settled down and started to study the Yugoslav and Panno lines myself, and found them to be not only playable but very rich and interesting.

With the King's Indian becoming popular again in the 21st Century, I was pleased to see that the Panno was Black's main choice at a high level. It was hardly surprising that when Victor Bologan's 2009 book *The King's Indian* came out, it was the Panno that was his recommendation. By combining my own analyses

with recent games and publications (in addition to Bologan, Boris Avrukh published a very high-level repertoire book for White), I believe I have managed to forge a reliable and flexible repertoire for Black against the Fianchetto Variation.

The rest of the lines in this book are less popular than the Classical, Sämisch and Fianchetto Variations, but many of them are very dangerous. The Four Pawns Attack is the most threatening for the unprepared. White tries to blow his opponent away in the centre of the board. Here I have gone for the main lines with 6...c5, rather than the modern lines with 6...d6. The main variations transpose into a Modern Benoni and these lines have always been considered to be reliable for Black. I have also devoted a chapter to White's sidelines in the Four Pawns. I believe these deviations are less dangerous, but there are several of them and they all have at least a bit of venom.

The Averbakh Variation was perhaps the most difficult for me in the entire book. It was hard just to choose a line for Black. Nowadays the Averbakh is not very popular. I believe this is mainly due to Black's success with the modern 6...d6. This line is very reliable, but I did not go with it for two reasons. Firstly, it has received a lot of coverage over the last decade or two in King's Indian literature. The Averbakh is rare enough that there have been few developments in very recent times. Secondly, the 6...d6 lines usually lead to strategic positions where White can manoeuvre around, hoping to obtain some sort of small advantage. The line I have chosen is one of the oldest responses to the Averbakh and it is very challenging for both players. I believe Black's play is quite sound and if he knows his stuff better than White, the first player will not be in for an easy time.

The remaining chapters in the book cover all of White's remaining lines. Most of these are positional in nature. Some of these are quite popular, such as the Mäkgonov and other h3 systems, as well as 5 d3 and 5 g2. Others are quite rare, but Black should still be prepared.

There are several different King's Indian pawn structures discussed in this book. In Volume I the various lines of the Classical and Sämisch tended to revolve around just a handful of structures. In this volume some of the same structures will be seen, but there are several more – different Benoni and Benko Gambit structures may arise, and a Maroczy Bind structure is not uncommon. Knowing different plans in these structures can help a player understand not only the ideas in King's Indian, but may also help in other openings and one's understanding of chess in general.

I should say too a few words about what this book *does not* cover. There are no 'Anti-King's Indians'; only lines with 2 c4 are covered. Obviously there were space considerations (these two volumes were originally supposed to be one 272-page

Attacking Chess: The King's Indian, Volume 2

book!), but the other reason is that Everyman Chess already has an excellent book that covers all of White's tries without 2 c4: Yelena Dembo's *Fighting the Anti-King's Indians*. In her book you will find everything – from the Trompowsky to the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit. The most important lines are the English lines, because if Black is not careful White may play a quick d2-d4 and get Black out of his preferred repertoire. Fortunately Yelena gives a specific move order for fans of the Panno!

There are a few people I would like to thank for their help with this second volume: my wife Heather, for more reasons than I can think of; my good friend IM Joe Fang, for the use of his extensive library and his excellent proof-reading; IM Vasik Rajlich, for keeping me up to date with *Rybka 4*, the primary analysis engine used for this book; GM Alexander Baburin, for providing me with the all of the extensive *Chess Today* databases; IM Richard Palliser for his edits and updates; and GM John Emms, for his seemingly never-ending patience for a long overdue book that was actually due October 22, 2010, the day Zoe was born...

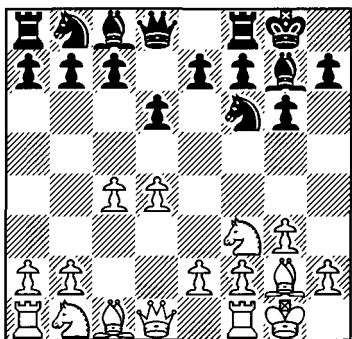
IM David Vigorito,
Somerville, Massachusetts,
March 2011

Chapter 1

Yugoslav Variation

7 ♖c3 a6 8 d5 ♘a5

1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♖f3 ♙g7 4 g3 0-0 5
 ♙g2 d6 6 0-0



Another common move order is 6 ♖c3 ♖c6 7 d5 ♗a5 8 ♖d2 c5 9 0-0 (with the knight on d2, 9 dxc6 makes little sense: for example, 9...♖xc6 10 0-0 ♙e6 11 b3 d5) 9...a6 reaching the main lines. Black can also play 9...e5 here, but we will not go into that.

The Fianchetto Variation is undoubtedly one of White's most solid options against the King's Indian. White's king tends to be very safe and

it is not so easy for Black to create counterplay.

6...♖c6

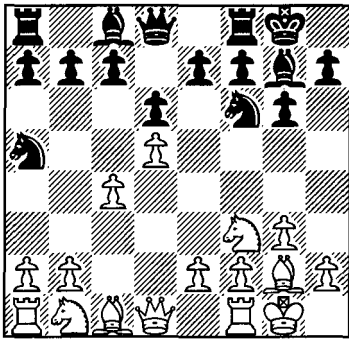
This is the Panno Variation, aptly named as it was in the Sämisch Variation seen in Volume I. Black has a similar idea: initiating queenside play with ...a6 and ...♖b8. In this chapter we examine lines where White plays a very quick d5. Play then transposes to the Yugoslav Variation, which may also come about from the move order 6...c5 7 ♖c3 ♖c6 8 d5 (8 dxc5 is a bit of a nuisance; perhaps it is not so dangerous, but after 8...dxc5 9 ♙e3 or 9 ♙f4 it is not easy for Black to play to win) 8...♗a5.

One common thread amongst all of the major lines for Black against the Fianchetto Variation is that they all take aim in some way at the c4-pawn. There is a definite logic to this because the pawn is less well protected than it would be with White's bishop on the f1-a6 diagonal. In the Panno Black plays

...a6 and ...♖b8 to enforce ...b5, while in the Yugoslav the c6-knight will attack the pawn directly.

7 ♖c3

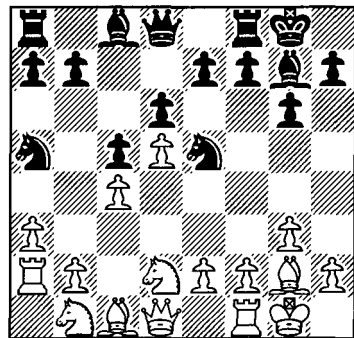
This is White's most common and flexible move, but the more forcing 7 d5 can be played as well. Generally play will transpose to the main lines, but both sides have some opportunity to vary after 7...♭a5 and then:



a) 8 ♖a4 c5 9 ♕d2 b6 10 ♕c3 (10 ♕xa5 bxa5 gives Black the bishop-pair and open b-file) 10...e5! (White's play is not completely harmless as I found out myself: 10...♕d7 11 ♖c2 b5 12 cxb5 ♕xb5 13 ♖a3 was very nice for White in E.Rodriguez-D.Vigorito, Washington 2009) 11 dxe6 (or 11 ♖bd2 ♖h5 12 e4 f5 with counterplay in G.Bagaturov-V.Ivanchuk, Yerevan 2004) 11...♕xe6 12 ♖g5 ♕d7 13 ♖d1 ♖b8 14 ♖xd6 ♖xc4 15 ♖f4 was C.Garcia Palermo-B.Avrkh, Turin Olympiad 2006. Here Bologan points out the shot 15...♖xb2! with the idea 16 ♕xb2 ♖h5 17 ♖d2 ♕xb2 18 ♖xb2 ♖xg5 and Black has a healthy extra pawn.

b) 8 ♖a3 c5 9 ♖e1 has been played a few times by Tregubov. The knight may look silly, but we will see many cases in the main line where White plays ♖c3 and then redirects the knight to a3 via b1. Still, as long as Black does not head for positions like those he should be fine. After 9...a6 (9...♕f5 also looks okay) 10 e4 Black can play 10...♖b8 or shift play to the centre and kingside with 10...e5 when both players' knights look funny on the queenside.

c) With 8 ♖fd2 White wants to get into the main lines. The easiest thing to do is acquiesce to this, but Black can vary if he so chooses: 8...c5 (giving White the chance to head back to normal positions, but both 8...c6!? and 8...♕d7!? are good alternatives) 9 a3 (probably better is 9 ♖c3, transposing to the main lines) 9...♖d7 (9...♖g4!?) 10 ♖a2 ♖e5.



Here White has:

c1) 11 b3 a6 12 ♕b2 b5 13 cxb5 axb5 14 b4 ♖b7 (not a great square, but White's pieces lack coordination; 14...♖ac4 is also possible) 15 ♖b3 ♖b6

16 ♗c3 was A.Karpov-A.Shirov, Polanica Zdroj 1998. Here 16...♗f5! prevents ♗c2 and looks strong: for example, 17 e4?! ♗g4 18 h3 ♗e2 19 ♖e1 ♗c4 gives Black great play.

c2) 11 ♗c2 ♗d7 (11...♗g4!?) 12 h3 (12 b4?! fails to 12...cxb4 13 axb4 ♖axc4 14 ♖xc4 ♖c8) 12...b5 13 b3?! (better is 13 cxb5 ♗xb5 14 ♖c3, although Black has counterplay after 14...♗b6) 13...bxc4 14 bxc4 (14 ♖xc4 ♖xb3! 15 ♗xb3 – if 15 ♖xe5 ♖d4 – 15...♖b8 16 ♗c2 ♖xc4 17 ♗xc4 ♖xb1) 14...♖b8 15 ♗b2 ♗c8 16 ♖h2 ♗a6 17 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 and Black was clearly better in M.Vucic-T.Shaked, New York 1994.

d) 8 ♖bd2 c5 and now:

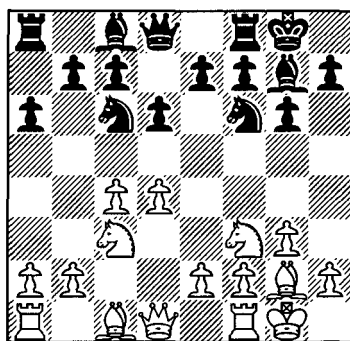
d1) 9 ♖e1 b5! (instead 9...♖b8 10 ♖b1 b5 11 cxb5 ♖xb5 12 ♖c2 would transpose, while 9...e6 10 ♖c2 ♖b8 11 a4 exd5 12 cxd5 ♖e8 13 ♖e1 was E.Bacrot-F.Nijboer, Wijk aan Zee 1997, when 13...♖g4!? is possible) 10 cxb5 ♖b8 11 ♖c2 (11 a4?! a6 12 bxa6 ♗xa6 gives Black excellent play against White's weakened queenside) 11...♖xb5 12 ♖b1 ♗f5 (12...♗d7 and 12...♗a6 are also possible) 13 e4 ♗g4 14 f3 ♗d7 with unclear play.

d2) 9 e4 b5! (there is no need for 9...a6, although 9...♖b8 10 ♖b1 b5 11 cxb5 ♖xb5 also looks reasonable) 10 cxb5 a6 11 bxa6 ♗xa6 12 ♖e1 ♖d7 13 ♖b3 ♖c4 and Black had a good Benko Gambit position in A.Hauchard-V.Bologan, Belfort 1995.

7...a6

This is the Panno Variation. Black is ready to initiate counterplay on the queenside.

The classical 7...e5 8 d5 ♖e7 has been out of favour for a long time. After 9 e4 (9 c5 is also possible) Black's e7-knight is not well placed. If we compare to the Mar Del Plata Variation from Volume I, White's kingside is well protected by his fianchettoed bishop, so Black lacks attacking chances and will suffer with a space disadvantage.



8 d5

White forces the game into the Yugoslav Variation. Other moves will be considered in the chapters on the Panno.

8...♖a5 9 ♖d2

This is the main line, but there are a couple of alternatives:

a) 9 ♗d3 c5 scores terribly for White. Now 10 dxc6 ♖xc6 makes little sense with the queen on d3, while 10 ♖d2 ♖b8 would allow Black to play normally with White's queen remaining vulnerable to ...♖g4-e5 ideas. Other moves also give White less than nothing:

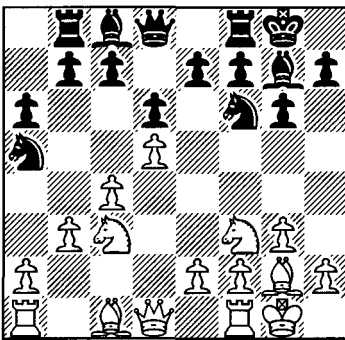
a1) 10 ♖b1 b5! 11 cxb5 c4 (also possible is 11...axb5 with the idea 12 b4 ♟b3!? when 13 ♖xb3 c4 is bad and 13 axb3 cxb4 wins back the piece because 14 ♟d1? fails to 14...♙f5) 12 ♖c2 axb5 gives Black good play because 13 ♟xb5? runs into 13...♙f5!.

a2) 10 e4 ♖b8 (worse is 10...b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♟xb5 ♙a6 13 a4) 11 ♖b1 (11 a4?! ♟b3) 11...b5 12 cxb5 c4! and again Black has excellent play.

b) 9 b3 is not so bad. Black has a choice:

b1) 9...c5 is the normal move, but White has a rare chance to try to transpose to a reasonable Maroczy Bind structure with 10 dxc6 (instead 10 ♙b2 ♖b8 11 ♟d2 b5 12 ♖c2 would reach the main lines), after which 10...bxc6!? (10...♟xc6 11 ♙b2 may give White his desired slight edge) 11 ♙b2 ♖b8 12 ♖d2 c5 is unclear.

b2) 9...♖b8!? is trickier.



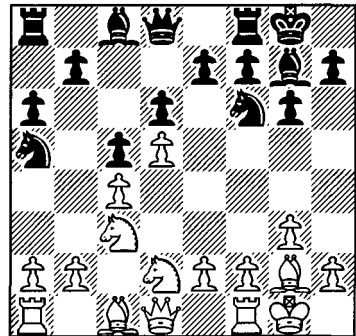
Now 10 ♖c2 c5 11 ♙b2 b5 12 ♟d2 would transpose into the main lines, but White also has:

b21) 10 ♙b2 b5!? (10...c5 11 ♟d2 b5

12 ♖c2 would reach the main lines) 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♟d4 (after 12 ♖c1 b4 13 ♟a4 both 13...♙b7 and 13...♙d7 look okay) 12...b4 suddenly transposes to the 8 b3 Panno (see Line B of Chapter Four).

b22) 10 ♟d4 ♙d7 (or 10...c5 11 dxc6 bxc6!?) 11 ♙b2 c5 12 dxc6 bxc6 is unclear. Black has avoided a normal Maroczy and can play ...c5 and ...♟a5-c6.

b23) 10 ♙d2 c5 11 dxc6 ♟xc6 (or 11...bxc6!?) 12 ♖c1 ♙f5 looks fine for Black after 13 ♟d5 ♙e4 or 13 ♟e1 ♖d7. 9...c5



This is the main starting point for the Yugoslav Variation. Play often revolves around Black's a5-knight. If it is able to contribute to Black's counterplay, Black should get decent chances, but if it becomes too passive, White can turn his attention to the centre and kingside, where his extra piece in play could prove decisive. Theory has often considered White to have an edge here, but Black has excellent tactical chances and it is White who must usually be careful to avoid an early knockout.

Even with best play, I believe Black has good chances.

White's main lines are designed to keep Black's queenside play under control. We have:

A: 10 $\text{R}b1$
B: 10 $\text{W}c2$

Instead 10 dxc6 dxc6 brings Black's knight back to the centre while leaving White's d2-knight misplaced. Trying to prevent ...b5 with 10 a4 leaves White's queenside weakened (the a5-knight has some influence here) and Black can create counterplay with 10...e6. That leaves:

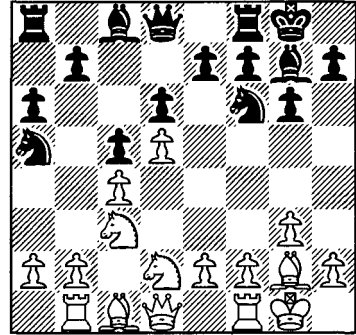
a) White cannot force Black's knight back to b7 with 10 a3. After 10... $\text{d}d7$ 11 $\text{W}c2$ $\text{d}e5$ 12 b3 b5! 13 cxb5 axb5 14 $\text{e}b2$ (or 14 dxb5 $\text{d}f3+$), Black has several good continuations such as 14...b4, 14... $\text{W}b6$ and 14... $\text{e}a6$.

b) Initiating central play with 10 e4 also gives Black good counterplay: for example, 10...b5!? (10... $\text{R}b8$ and 10...e6 are good alternatives) 11 cxb5 axb5 12 dxb5 $\text{e}a6$ 13 a4 $\text{W}d7$ when Black won back the pawn and had the better pawn structure in A.Sztern-G.Lane, Canberra 2001.

A) 10 $\text{R}b1$

This is a typical prophylactic move to safeguard White's queenside. The rook removes itself from the long diagonal in anticipation of b2-b3. Play may transpose to Line B1, but here we

will only consider lines without an early $\text{W}c2$.

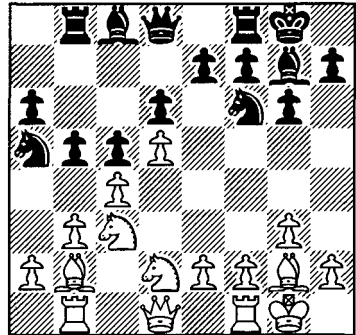


10... $\text{R}b8$

This is consistent with Black's queenside agenda.

11 b3 b5 12 $\text{e}b2$

Instead 12 $\text{W}c2$ would transpose to Line B1.



White's queenside appears to be quite secure, so Black has to properly time his moves to create counterplay. Typical ideas are ... bxc4 , ...e5 and ... $\text{e}h6$, which simply attacks the piece that defends the c4-pawn.

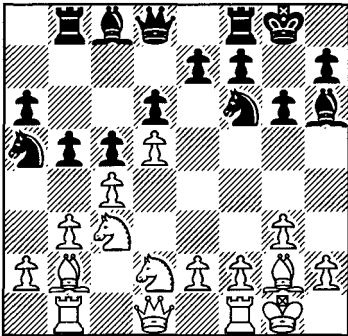
12... bxc4

Also common is the immediate

12...e5, but I do not like this much because White can change the pawn structure with 13 dxe6 $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{xe6}$ (Black's structure is loose after 13...fxe6 14 cxb5 axb5 15 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{ce4}$) 14 cxb5 axb5 15 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{de4}$ when the d6-pawn is vulnerable and the a5-knight must still get back into play.

Instead 12... $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{f5}$ could lead to the note to White's 13th move in Line B1 after 13 e4 $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{d7}$ 14 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{c2}$ e5, although here White could also consider 14 $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{a1}$!.

An alternate move order for Black is to maintain the tension with 12... $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{h6}$.



White has:

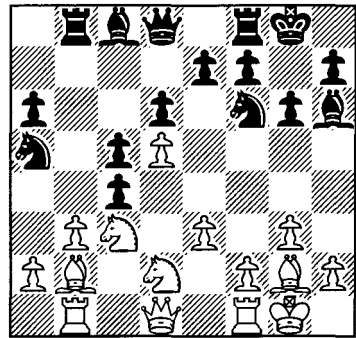
a) 13 f4?! is a typical reaction, but here it is mistimed: 13...bxc4 14 bxc4 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{g4}$! 15 $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{f3}$ $\text{\textcircled{g}}\text{g7}$ 16 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{e1}$?! (not 16 e3 $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{xb2}$!, but relatively best is 16 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{a4}$, although Black has a strong initiative after 16... $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{xb2}$! 17 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xb2}$ $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{d4}$ + 18 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{h1}$ $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{e3}$ or 17 $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{xb2}$ $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{d4}$ + 18 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{h1}$ e5!) 16... $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{d4}$ + 17 e3 and now rather than 17... $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{xb2}$ 18 exd4 $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{xb1}$ 19 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xb1}$ cxd4 20 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{e2}$ when White was okay in M.Medic-I.Berezina, Yerevan Olympiad 1996, Black could have played

17... $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xe3}$! 18 $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{xe3}$ $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{f5}$ when White's position falls apart.

b) 13 cxb5 axb5 14 $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{a1}$ (or 14 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{de4}$ $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xe4}$ 15 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xe4}$ b4 16 e3 $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{a6}$ 17 $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{e1}$ c4 with counterplay) 14...b4 15 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{a4}$ e5 (15... $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{a6}$!?) 16 dxe6 $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{xe6}$ 17 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xf6}$ $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xf6}$ 18 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{e4}$ $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{e7}$ 19 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xd6}$ $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xd6}$ 20 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xd6}$ c4 21 bxc4 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xc4}$ 22 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xc4}$ $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{xc4}$ 23 $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{b2}$ $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{fc8}$ gave Black good compensation for the pawn in M.Makarov-G.Kuzmin, Yerevan 1981.

c) 13 $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{a1}$ $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{f5}$! (instead 13... $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{xd2}$ 14 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{xd2}$ bxc4 15 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{e4}$ gives White compensation, 13...bxc4 transposes to the main line and 13... $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{d7}$ 14 cxb5 axb5 15 b4 cxb4 16 $\text{\textcircled{f}}\text{xb4}$ $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{c7}$ was fairly level in Z.Ribli-A.Khalifman, German League 1996) 14 e4 $\text{\textcircled{g}}\text{g4}$ 15 f3 $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{e3}$ + 16 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{h1}$ $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{d7}$ 17 cxb5 axb5 18 $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{e2}$ e5 (I would prefer 18...b4! intending ... $\text{\textcircled{c}}\text{b6}$ and ... $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{b5}$, and perhaps ...c4) 19 dxe6 and now rather than 19...fxe6 20 e5 when Black's structure was broken up in L.Aronian-H.Nakamura, Moscow 2010, 19... $\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{xe6}$ looks fine for Black.

d) 13 e3 bxc4 and here:

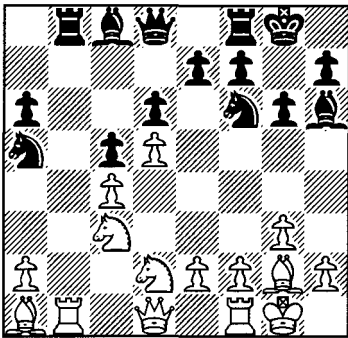


d1) 14 $\text{bxc}4?$! is the normal reaction, leaving Black with his a5-knight, but after 14... $\text{e}f5$ 15 e4 $\text{e}g4$ 16 f3 (16 $\text{Wc}2$ $\text{e}f5$) Black is spoilt for choice: 16... $\text{e}e3+$ 17 $\text{c}h1$ $\text{e}d7$ 18 $\text{e}a1$ (18 $\text{e}c1$ $\text{Wxb}1$ 19 $\text{d}cxb1$ $\text{Wb}6$ gives Black the initiative) and now rather than 18... $\text{e}f5$ 19 $\text{Wxd}2$ $\text{d}xc4$ 20 $\text{W}e2$ when White has some compensation for the pawn, Black should prefer 18... $\text{Wc}7$ with an excellent position.

d2) 14 $\text{d}xc4$ $\text{d}xc4$ 15 $\text{bxc}4$ $\text{W}a5$ 16 $\text{e}a1$ $\text{e}d7$ 17 $\text{Bb}3$ $\text{e}g7$ 18 a3?! $\text{d}g4!$ 19 $\text{e}f3$ (19 $\text{Wc}2$ $\text{e}a4$ looks good for Black) 19... $\text{d}e5$ 20 $\text{e}e2$ $\text{e}h3!$ 21 $\text{B}e1$ $\text{d}d7$ 22 $\text{Bxb}8$ $\text{Bxb}8$ 23 $\text{d}e4$ $\text{e}f5$ 24 $\text{e}xg7$ $\text{e}xe4!$ 25 $\text{e}h6$ $\text{d}e5$ 26 $\text{Bf}1$ (26 $\text{e}f4$ $\text{d}d3!$ 27 $\text{e}f5$ $\text{e}f4$ is winning for Black) 26... $\text{Wxa}3$ 27 f3 $\text{e}d3$ 28 $\text{e}f5$ $\text{Wxd}3$ 29 $\text{Wxd}3$ $\text{d}xd3$ 30 $\text{B}a1$ $\text{Bb}6$ 31 e4 $\text{d}e5$ 32 $\text{e}f2$ $\text{Bb}2+$ 0-1 was R.Ponomarev-R.Kasimdzhanov, Vitoria Gasteiz 2007.

13 $\text{bxc}4$ $\text{e}h6$ 14 $\text{e}a1$

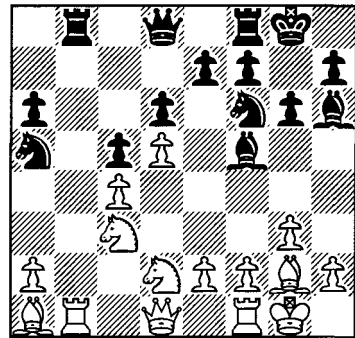
White steers clear of the b8-rook. Instead 14 f4?! $\text{d}g4$ would transpose to variation 'a' in the last notes, while 14 e3?! $\text{e}f5$ reaches variation 'd1' there.



14... $\text{e}f5$

This is a typical idea to provoke weaknesses in White's camp.

Instead 14... $\text{Wxb}1$ 15 $\text{d}cxb1!$ helps White consolidate and 15... $\text{e}e5?$! 16 $\text{dxe}6$ $\text{e}xe6$ 17 $\text{W}a4$ $\text{e}d7$ 18 $\text{W}a3$ gave White a clear advantage in G.Dizdard-Anagnostopoulos, Paris 1996; Black's knight is stuck and the a6-pawn is weak. Otherwise, 14... $\text{e}d7$ looks rather slow after 15 e3 and the thematic 14... $\text{Bb}4$ 15 $\text{Bxb}4$ $\text{cxb}4$ 16 $\text{d}ce4$ $\text{d}d7$ (even worse is 16... $\text{d}xe4$ 17 $\text{d}xe4$ with the initiative for White) 17 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{Wb}6$ 18 $\text{Wc}2$ $\text{e}g7$ 19 $\text{e}xg7$ $\text{e}xg7$ 20 $\text{Bb}1$ left Black's queenside vulnerable in L.Mkrtchian-E.Paetz, Turin Olympiad 2006.



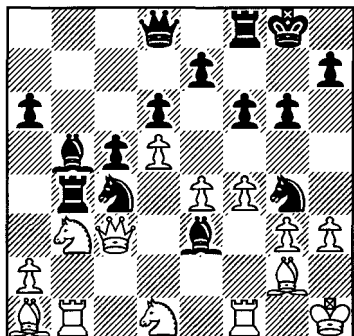
15 $\text{Bxb}8$

This is safer than 15 e4 $\text{e}g4$ (15... $\text{e}d7$ is well met by 16 f4! locking out the h6-bishop) 16 f3 (after 16 $\text{Wc}2$ $\text{e}f5$ 17 $\text{Wxd}2$ $\text{d}xc4$ 18 $\text{Wd}3$ $\text{d}e5$ 19 $\text{Wxa}6$ $\text{B}a8$ 20 $\text{Wb}5$ $\text{e}f3$ Black had a good position in K.Landa-Tong Yuanming, Beijing 1996) 16... $\text{e}e3+$ 17 $\text{c}h1$ $\text{e}d7$ and now:

a) 18 ♖xb8 ♜xb8 19 ♗cb1 ♕d4! 20 ♕xd4 cxd4 21 ♗b3 ♗xb3 22 axb3 ♜b6 23 ♜d3 e5 24 ♗d2 ♕c8! 25 ♖b1 ♜b4 26 ♖a1 ♗d7 was excellent for Black in E.Solana Suarez-A.Romero Holmes, Almeria 1989.

b) 18 h3 ♕xd2 (Black could try 18...♖b4 or 18...♜c7!? with the idea of ...♖b4) 19 ♜xd2 ♗xc4 20 ♜e2 gave White some compensation for the pawn in M.Matlak-Z.Kulczewski, correspondence 1990.

c) 18 ♗b3 ♗xc4! (18...♗xb3 19 axb3 ♕d4 20 ♗e2 ♕xa1 21 ♖xa1 a5 22 ♗f4 gave White a slight edge in a couple of games played by Dizdar) 19 ♜d3 (or 19 ♜e2 ♖b4 20 a3 ♖xb3 21 ♖xb3 ♗d2!) 19...♖b4 20 f4 (again, after 20 a3 ♖xb3 21 ♖xb3 Black has 21...♗d2) 20...♗g4 21 ♗d1 ♕b5 22 ♜c3 f6 23 h3

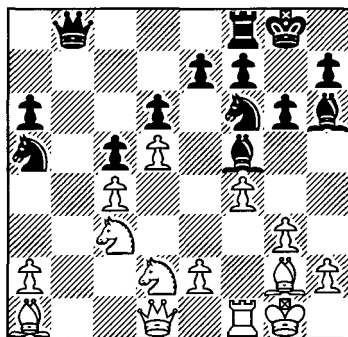


23...♕d4! (this is much better than 23...♗d2 24 ♗xe3 ♗xb1 25 ♖xb1 ♗f2+ 26 ♖h2 ♗xe4 27 ♜c2 when White is better) 24 ♗xd4 (or 24 ♜c1 ♗ge3) 24...♖xb1 25 ♗xb5 (White is also in big trouble after 25 ♗c6 ♜d7 26 hxg4 ♗b6! with ideas like ...♕xf4 and ...♗a4)

25...axb5 26 hxg4 ♜a8 gives Black a winning position. White is so badly coordinated that he cannot defend.

15...♜xb8 16 f4

After 16 h3 Black has 16...♜b4! 17 e4 ♕d7 18 ♜e2 (18 f4? ♗xc4 19 ♗xc4 ♜xc4 20 e5 ♗e8 worked out well for Black in S.Lputian-A.Khalifman, Istanbul 2000) 18...♕xd2 19 ♜xd2 ♗xc4 20 ♜e2 ♖b8 (20...♕b5!? 21 ♖b1 ♜a5 also makes sense) 21 ♖h2 (after 21 ♖b1 ♜xb1+ 22 ♗xb1 ♖xb1+ 23 ♖h2 ♖xa1 24 ♜xc4 ♕b5 Black has sufficient play) and now rather than 21...♗b2? 22 ♕xb2 ♜xb2 23 ♖b1 ♜xc3 24 ♖xb8+ ♖g7 25 ♜b2 when White was much better in L.Aronian-R.Ponomarev, Lausanne 2001, Black can clearly improve with 21...♕b5! with an excellent position.



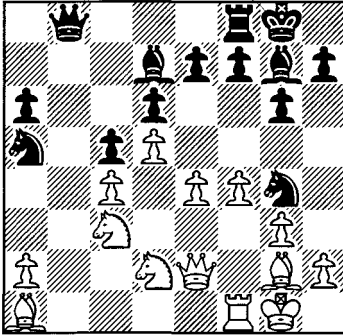
16...♗g4

This is not the only good move. Black could play 16...♕g7 17 e4 ♕d7 or even 16...♜b4 17 e4 ♕g4 18 ♜a4 ♕d7 (18...g5!?) 19 ♜xb4 cxb4 20 ♗e2 ♖c8 21 ♖c1 ♕g7 22 h3 ♕a4 when he had good counterplay in A.Ornstein-T.Ernst, Malmo 1986.

17 e4 d7

Black just lost material after 17...d3? 18 Wa4 xf1 19 exf1 in G.Dizdar-L.Elkin, Plovdiv 2008.

18 We2 g7



Black has good play and White is compelled to sacrifice a pawn.

19 e5

Instead 19 h3 is met by 19...d4+ 20 h1 d3, while 19 d3 runs into 19...Wb4! attacking the c4-pawn.

19...dxe5 20 dce4 f5

Or 20...exf4!? with the idea 21 exg7 xg7 22 dxc5? Wb6.

21 h3

Perhaps better was 21 d2 xf2 22 Wxf2 when White has counterplay against the c5-pawn.

21...fxe4

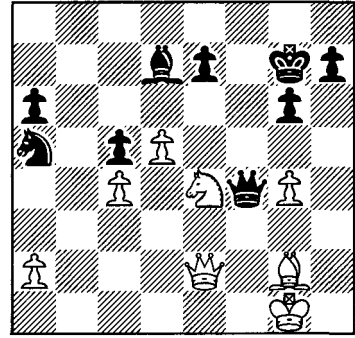
Worth considering was 21...exf4 22 exg7 xg7 23 hxg4 fxe4 24 dxe4 We5 25 gxf4 Wd4+.

22 hxg4 exf4

The position is very complicated and 22...e3 23 We3 exf4 24 We7 (not 24 gxf4 exa1 25 xa1 Wxf4) 24...f7 was another possibility.

23 exg7 xg7 24 dxe4 We5 25 gxf4 Bxf4

Not 25...Wd4+ 26 h1 dxc4? 27 d1. 26 Bxf4 Wxf4



27 dxc5

Simpler was 27 Wb2+ g8 28 Wb6 with equality.

27...Wd4+ 28 Wf2 Wxf2+ 29 xxf2 exg4 30 f1 c8 31 de4 f5 32 e3

Not 32 d3 c5 f6 33 dxa6 e5 when Black's king becomes too active.

32...d7 33 c5 exe4 34 xe4 dxc5+ 35 d4 d7 36 xa6 f7

And here V.Potkin-F.Vallejo Pons, Rijeka 2010, was agreed drawn.

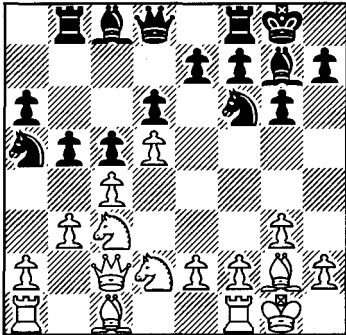
B) 10 Wc2

This is the main line. White protects the c3-knight without committing his rook just yet.

10...Bb8 11 b3

Invariably played, because after 11 a4?! the a5-knight will always have a future. After 11...e5 12 b3 h5! 13 e4 h4 14 b2 e6 15 d3 hxg3 16 hxg3 dg4 Black had good, thematic play in E.L'Ami-R.Rapport, Aix-les-Bains 2011.

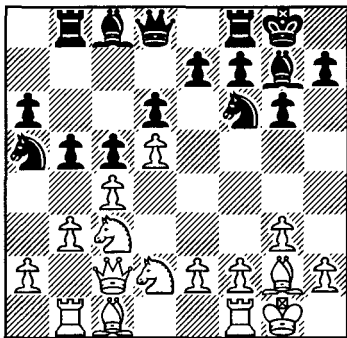
11...b5



Now White has another decision to make. He can initiate play on the queenside himself or he can simply develop.

- B1: 12 ♖b1
- B2: 12 ♗b2

B1) 12 ♖b1



White clears his rook from the long diagonal and prepares for the opening of the queenside.

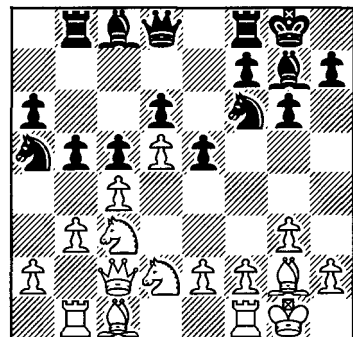
12...e5

There are other moves as well, including 12...e6, 12...♗f5, 12...♗d7 and

12...h5!?. However, the obvious 12...bxc4 13 bxc4 ♖xb1 14 ♗cxb1! helps White to consolidate his c4-pawn.

12...♖c7 was Janjgava's main line. The point is that 13 cxb5?! axb5 14 b4? is bad because of 14...cxb4 15 ♖xb4 ♗xd5!, but after 13 ♗b2 White's ♖b1 looks more useful than Black's ...♖c7.

The immediate 12...♗h6!? is another possibility. Then 13 f4 bxc4 (not 13...e5?! 14 fxе5! ♗g4 15 ♗de4 ♗xc1 16 ♖xc1 ♗xe5 17 ♗f6+ ♗g7 18 cxb5 axb5 19 ♗ce4 with an attack) 14 bxc4 ♖xb1 15 ♗cxb1 e5 16 fxе5 ♗g4 17 ♗f3 (or 17 ♗e4 ♗xc1 18 ♖xc1 ♗xe5) 17...♗e3+ 18 ♗h1 ♗f5 is tempting, but White comes out on top: 19 ♖c3! ♗f2+ 20 ♖xf2 ♗xf2 21 ♗h6 ♗xb1 22 exd6 f6 23 ♗xf8 ♗xf8 24 ♗g5! ♖xd6 25 ♗e6+ ♗e7 26 ♖xa5 ♗f5 27 ♗f3 ♗xe6 28 dxе6 ♗xe6 29 ♗g2 ♗d4 30 ♗b7 and White went on to squeeze out a win in T.L.Petrosian-D.Petrosian, Yerevan 2010.



13 cxb5

White chooses to open the queenside himself. Other plans:

- a) 13 b4 cxb4 (instead 13...♗f5?! 14

e4 cxb4 15 ♖xb4 ♗d7 16 cxb5 axb5 17 ♖b1 transposes to the note to Black's 14th move, below) 14 ♖xb4 ♖c7 15 cxb5 axb5 and Black intends ...♗d7 and ...♞fc8 with counterplay. An important detail is that White cannot move his queen (like to b1) to attack the b5-pawn because the c3-knight is loose.

b) 13 e4 ♗d7! (White maintains a pull after 13...♗h6 14 cxb5 axb5 15 b4 cxb4 16 ♖xb4 or 13...♗h5 14 cxb5 axb5 15 b4 cxb4 16 ♖xb4) 14 ♗d1 (14 cxb5 axb5 15 b4 cxb4 16 ♖xb4 ♖c7 gives Black good play, as in variation 'a' above) and now 14...♗g4! is an interesting possibility. Black prepares ...f5 with counterplay.

c) 13 ♗b2 is the most common alternative. Black has several possibilities, such as 13...h5, 13...♗h5, 13...♗g4 and 13...♗f5. The simplest is to play 13...♗h6 14 f4 (14 e3 ♗f5 looks okay for Black) 14...bxc4 15 bxc4 transposing to Line B222 which is quite comfortable for Black.

c) 13 dxe6 ♗xe6 and now:

c1) 14 ♗d5 bxc4 (not 14...♗xd5 15 cxd5 when the a5-knight remains out of play) 15 bxc4 ♖xb1 16 ♗xb1 (16 ♖xb1 runs into 16...♗xc4!) 16...♗xd5 17 cxd5 ♗d7 18 ♗b2 ♗xb2 19 ♖xb2 ♞e8 20 e3 ♗b5 21 ♞c1 ♗c4 sees the knight come into the game and Black had good play after 22 ♖c3 ♗e5 23 ♗d2 h5 in T.Seeman-O.Sepp, Tallinn 2003.

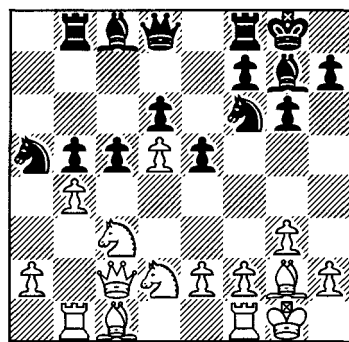
c2) 14 cxb5 axb5 and here:

c21) 15 b4?! (after 15 ♗ce4 Black could play 15...♗d5!, so perhaps 15

♗de4 should be played) 15...cxb4 16 ♖xb4 ♖c7! 17 ♖d3 ♗c6! 18 ♖xb5 ♗b4! 19 ♖d4 (Golubev suggests 19 ♖xb4 ♖xb4 20 ♗a3 ♖b6 21 ♗b5, even though Black is doing well after 21...♖d7) 19...♗fd5 20 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 21 ♖d3 ♗b4 22 ♖xb4 ♖xb4 and Black was up the exchange in S.Guliev-A.Fedorov, Dubai 2009.

c22) 15 ♗ce4 ♗xe4 16 ♗xe4 ♗f5 17 ♗b2 ♗xb2 (or 17...♞e8!? 18 ♗xg7 ♗xg7) 18 ♖xb2 ♗xe4 19 ♗xe4 d5 20 ♞fd1 d4 21 h4 ♞e8 22 ♗f3 ♖f6 23 ♞bc1 ♞e5 24 ♖d2 was seen in M.Vasilev-F.Nemeth, Rochefort 2006. Here Black should have played 24...b4 with approximate equality.

13...axb5 14 b4

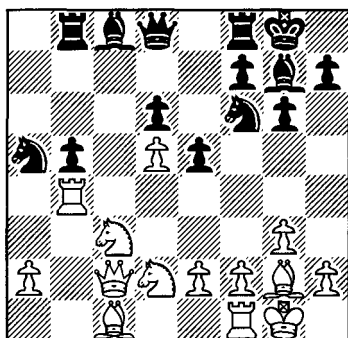


This is White's idea. He hopes to put pressure on Black's b5-pawn.

14...cxb4

Black should avoid 14...♗f5?!, since 15 e4 (this ends up being useful here) 15...cxb4 16 ♖xb4 ♗d7 17 ♖b1! ♖e8 18 ♗f3! with the idea of ♗e2 gave White the advantage in O.Cvitan-A.Shirov, Neum 2002.

15 ♖xb4



15...♗c7

Black pins the c3-knight and White's queen to the knight's defence. This is not the most popular, but it looks best.

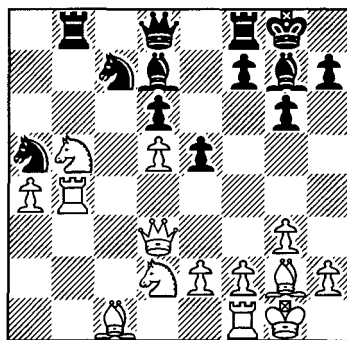
Instead 15...♗f5?! 16 e4 ♗d7 leads back to the note above where White has 17 ♗b1! and developing the bishop immediately with 15...♗a6 is not very flexible. After 16 ♗b1! ♗c7 (16...♗e8!?) 17 ♖xb5 ♗c5 18 a4 ♖xd5 (also insufficient is 18...♗xb5 19 ♖xb5 ♗xb5 20 ♗xb5 ♗xb5 21 axb5 ♖b8 22 ♗a3 ♖xb5 23 ♖c1! ♗f8 24 ♖c8 ♖g7 25 e4 with a clear advantage for White in G.Dizdaru-V.Valenta, Graz 1994) 19 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 20 ♖c7 ♖xb4 21 ♗xb4 ♗b7 22 ♗xa5 ♗xe2 23 ♖e1 White was winning in Y.Drozdoskij-A.Shirov, Odessa 2007.

The most popular move is 15...♗d7 which is perhaps sufficient, although Black should be careful. White has:

a) 16 ♗a3 ♖e8 (this is the only move ever played, but 16...♗b6 is interesting, with the idea 17 ♖fb1?! ♖fc8! when with ideas like ...e4 and ...♖g4, Black has excellent play) 17 ♖fb1 ♖c8 18 e4 (18 ♗b2

♖c7 19 ♗d1 f5 gave Black good counterplay in S.Panzalovic-R.Nicevski, Kladovo 1991) 18...♗c7 19 ♗b2 ♗c5 20 ♗a1 f5 with a good position for Black in D.Rogozenko-A.Khalifman, Bad Wiessee 1998.

b) 16 ♗d3 ♖e8 (Bologan suggests 16...♖b7 17 ♗b1 ♖c5 18 ♖xb5 ♗g4 19 ♖e1 e4 20 ♖c3 e3! 21 fxe3 ♗c7 22 ♗a3 ♗f5 when Black has good play) 17 ♖xb5 ♖c7 18 a4 and now:



b1) 18...♖a6?! 19 ♖b1 ♖c5 20 ♗c2 and White was a pawn ahead in M.Sorokin-M.Al Sayed, Calcutta 2002.

b2) 18...♖xb5 19 axb5 ♗b6 20 ♖e4 f5 (20...♗xb5 21 ♗b1) 21 ♖g5 ♗c5 will regain the pawn, but Black may have some concerns over the e6-square.

b3) 18...f5!? prevents ♖e4. After 19 e4 ♖xb5 20 axb5 ♗b6 Black regains the pawn with a good position.

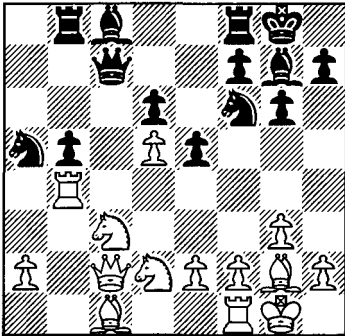
c) 16 ♗b1 ♗c7 (Black can also try 16...♗e8 17 ♗a3 ♖b6 with the idea of ...♗b8 and ...♖e8-c7), and now:

c1) 17 ♖b3?! ♗xc3 18 ♖xa5 ♖a8 19 ♖c6 ♖xd5! was a neat blow in D.Anic-B.Filipovic, Budapest 1990.

c2) 17 ♖b2 ♗c4 (instead 17...♞c5 18 ♖a1 was E.Ermenkov-K.Angelov, Elenite 1986, and here 18...♞bc8!? looks fine for Black, while 17...♖h6!? 18 e3 ♗c4 19 ♗xc4 bxc4 20 ♖c1 ♞xb4 21 ♞xb4 ♞b8 gave Black the initiative in O.Cvitan-R.Gunawan, Sarajevo 1988, although here 18 ♗de4 is an improvement) 18 ♗xc4 bxc4 19 ♞xb8 ♞xb8 and Black had some initiative in E.Gisbrecht-L.Borbjerggaard, German League 2001.

c3) 17 ♗xb5! ♞c5 18 a4 ♗xd5 19 ♞b2 gives White the initiative. One example: 19...♗f6 20 ♞c2 ♞b6 21 ♖a3 with some advantage in W.Brandhorst-N.Pedersen, correspondence 2002.

Returning to 15...♞c7:



16 ♞d3

Instead 16 ♖b2 can be met 16...♖f5 or 16...♖a6 now that ♞b1 is not a threat, but 16 ♖a3 is possible. Black has:

a) 16...♖a6 17 ♞c1 ♞fc8 18 ♞b1 ♞b6 19 e3 h5!? (hardly the only move) 20 ♗xb5 ♞xc1+ 21 ♖xc1 ♞c5 22 a4 ♗xd5 23 ♖xd5 ♞xd5 24 ♗c7 (a better try was 24 ♗c3 ♞xb4 25 ♞xb4 ♞c5 26 ♖a3) 24...♞xb4 25 ♞xb4 ♞c6 26 ♗xa6 ♞xc1+

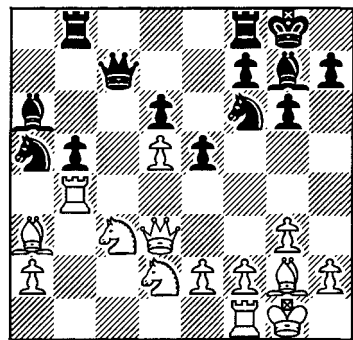
27 ♗f1 ♗c4 was fine for Black in Y.Drozdoskij-D.Kokarev, Dagomys 2010.

b) 16...♖f5 17 ♞b2 (alternatively, 17 e4?! ♞fc8 gives Black the initiative, while after 17 ♞c1 ♖d7 Black has disturbed the coordination of White's major pieces) 17...e4 is critical. After 18 ♗xb5 (not 18 ♞xb5? ♗g4!) 18...♞xb5! 19 ♞xb5 ♗xd5 20 ♞b1 ♗c3 21 ♞b4 Black can exploit his superior piece coordination with 21...♗c6! (instead 21...♗xb5 22 ♞xb5 e3!? 23 fxe3 ♖h6 24 ♖b4 ♖xe3+ 25 ♖h1 ♖xd2 26 ♖xd2 ♗c4 27 ♖h6 ♞b8 gives Black active pieces, but he will miss his dark-squared bishop) 22 ♞b7 (22 ♞xd6 ♞xd6 23 ♖xd6 ♞d8! is good for Black) 22...♞c8 23 ♞b6 ♖d4 24 ♞a6 (24 ♞c7 ♗a5! 25 ♞xc8 ♞xc8 26 ♞b4 ♗c6 27 ♞b7 ♗xe2+ 28 ♖h1 d5 leaves Black with more than enough for the exchange) 24...♗a5! and Black wins back the material with a good position.

16...♖a6

16...♖f5!? was suggested by Gelfand. If 17 e4 ♖d7 18 ♗xb5? ♞c5 Black wins material.

17 ♖a3



Here Black has:

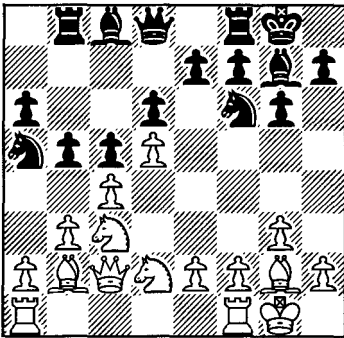
a) 17...♘d7?! 18 ♖xb5, as in V.Gavrikov-B.Gelfand, Horgen 1994, looks insufficient.

b) 17...♗c4 18 ♖xc4 bxc4 19 ♖c2 ♗xb4 20 ♗xb4 ♗b8 21 ♗b1 ♘d7 22 ♖a4! is very awkward for Black.

c) 17...♗b6 18 ♗fb1 ♗fb8 with the idea of ...♘d7 was suggested by Janjgava.

d) 17...♗fc8 18 ♖c1 (after 18 ♖xb5 ♖d7 19 ♗fb1 ♗b6 the pin is very uncomfortable for White) 18...♖d7 gives Black a solid position.

B2) 12 ♗b2



This is the main line.

12...bxc4

The move orders here are a bit tricky. 12...e6 and 12...e5 are both playable and lead to different types of positions, but Black can also play the immediate 12...♗h6!?. This avoids Line B21, but grants White some additional possibilities, although they do not look too dangerous:

a) 13 f4 is the most common. After

13...bxc4 14 bxc4 e5 we reach the main line of Line B22 while avoiding Line B21.

b) 13 ♗cb1?! loses its point because after 13...e5 14 ♗c3 b4!? (even a neutral move like 14...♗e8 or 14...♗d7 should be satisfactory because ♗a3 is not possible) 15 ♗b2 and now both 15...♗h5 and 15...♗b7 are fine for Black.

c) 13 ♗ce4 ♗xe4 14 ♗xe4 bxc4 and now 15 bxc4? is not possible because of 15...♗xd2.

d) 13 cxb5 is White's attempt to steer the game away from the main lines. After 13...axb5 14 ♗de4 (if 14 e4 Black can play 14...♗a6 or 14...b4 15 ♗d1 e5!?) Black has:

d1) 14...♗g7 15 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 16 ♗e4 ♗xb2 17 ♖xb2 b4 18 ♗fc1?! ♖b6 19 ♖d2 ♗f5 20 ♖h6?! (White's play seems a bit random) 20...♗xe4 21 ♗xe4 c4! 22 bxc4 b3 with a big advantage for Black in Nimzo-G.Ligterink, The Hague 1992.

d2) 14...b4 15 ♗xf6+ exf6 16 ♗e4 ♗g7 17 ♖c1 ♗f5 (Black could also try 17...f5 18 ♗xg7 ♗xg7 19 ♖b2+ f6 because the forcing sequence 20 ♗g5 ♖e7 21 e4 ♖e5 22 ♖xe5 fxe5 23 exf5 gxf5 24 ♗e6+ ♗xe6 25 dxe6 ♗f6 26 ♗d5 ♗b6! 27 a3?! bxa3 28 ♗xa3 ♗c6 is good for him) 18 ♗d2 ♗e8 19 ♗e1 ♗d7 20 a3 was I.Foygel-D.Vigorito, Natick 2009. Now the simplest is 20...♖b6 with the idea of 21 axb4 ♖xb4 22 ♗c3? ♗xb3!.

So 12...♗h6 is a viable move order if Black wants to avoid Line B21, even though it is not clear that he should need to.

13 bxc4 ♗h6

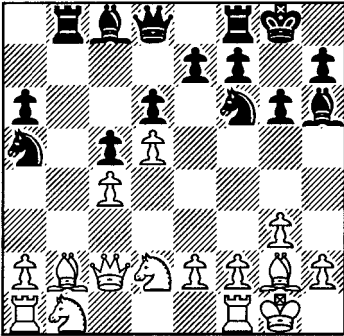
Now Black simply threatens to take the knight on d2 when the c4-pawn will fall. White has:

B21: 14 ♗cb1

B22: 14 f4

Instead 14 e3? is a classic trap which a number of strong players have fallen into: 14...♙f5 15 e4 (White is also in trouble after 15 ♖c1 ♙d3 or 15 ♗ce4 ♗xe4 16 ♗xe4 ♗xc4) 15...♙xd2 16 exf5 ♗xc4 17 ♗d1 ♗xb2 18 ♗xb2 and now both 18...♙h6 and 18...♖a5 give Black the upper hand.

B21) 14 ♗cb1



This is certainly a funny-looking move, but it has twice been employed to beat Kasparov, so it must be taken seriously! With this unusual retreat, White hopes to completely consolidate on the queenside after which he can direct all of his energy to the centre and kingside. The c4-pawn is now firmly defended and White intends to continue with ♙c3 and ♗a3 when the a5-knight will be

both inactive and a target. Fortunately, Black has some resources of his own.

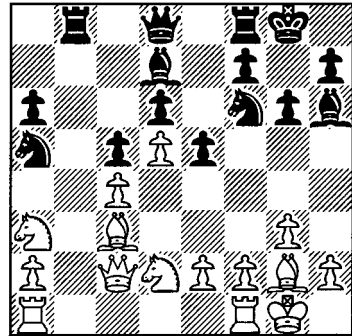
14...e5

Instead 14...♙d7 allows White to execute his plan: 15 ♙c3 ♖c7 (better is 15...e5) 16 ♗b3 (after 16 ♗a3 Black has 16...♖b4! 17 ♙xb4 cxb4 18 ♗ab1 ♖c8 with good compensation for the exchange) 16...♙a4 17 e3 ♙g7 18 ♗1d2 and White kept an edge in Z.Ribli-S.Bouaziz, Las Palmas 1982. Black will eventually be forced to resolve the a5-knight problem in an unfavourable way: retreating to the sad b7-square or by exchanging on b3, which would strengthen White's pawn structure.

15 ♙c3

After 15 dxe6?! ♙xe6 Black develops rapidly and White will likely regret his fanciful 14th move.

15...♙d7 16 ♗a3



16...♖b4!

Black must keep some momentum. Instead 16...♙g7 17 ♖ab1 ♖c7 18 e4 h5 19 f4 allowed White to successfully push forward in the centre in L.Zaid-G.Kasparov, Leningrad 1977, where the

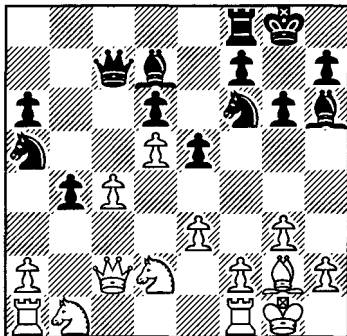
a5-knight did not participate.

17 ♖xb4

White has an alternative in 17 ♖b3!?. This is untried but Black should take this move seriously: 17...♗b7!? (instead 17...♗xb3 18 axb3 ♖b8 19 ♖b1 favours White and 17...♗c7 18 ♖xa5 ♗xa5 19 ♖xb4 cxb4 20 ♖b1 ♖c8 21 a3! is also insufficient) 18 ♖xb4 (18 e4 could be met with 18...♖a4 19 ♖b2 ♗b6 20 ♖ab1 ♗b4) 18...cxb4 19 ♖b1 a5 with good play for the exchange.

17...cxb4 18 ♖ab1 ♗c7 19 e3

Instead 19 c5 makes little sense. Then 19...♗xc5 20 ♗b2 (or 20 ♗xc5 dxc5 21 ♖b3 ♖b7 22 ♖1d2 ♖b5 with good compensation) was B.Kurajica-B.Filipovic, Banja Luka 1983. Here 20...♗b6! 21 e3 (Black is also doing very well after 21 a3 b3 22 ♖c3 ♖xd2! 23 ♗xd2 ♖c4) 21...♖g4! gives Black excellent play. If 22 h3? ♖xe3 23 fxe3 ♖xe3+ 24 ♖h1 ♖d4 and a rook down, Black is completely winning.



19...♖f5!

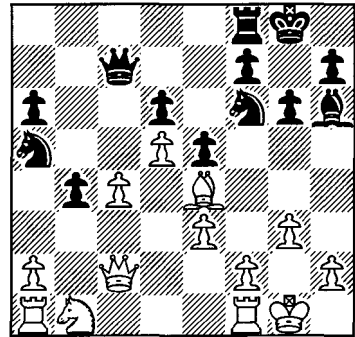
An important move. Instead 19...♖c8?! allows White to successfully

fight for the initiative on the queenside with 20 a3!. After 20...b3 21 ♖xb3 ♖a4 22 ♖1d2 ♖xb3 23 ♖xb3 ♖b8 24 ♖ab1 ♗b6 25 ♖b2! White was better in L.Psakhis-B.Avrukh, Israeli League 2001. If 25...♖xb3 26 ♖fb1 and White will keep some pressure in the endgame.

20 ♖e4

Instead 20 e4 ♖d7 leaves White's queenside bottled up and Black can improve his position with moves like ...♖c8 and ...♗c5.

20...♖xe4 21 ♖xe4



For the exchange Black has excellent dark-square control and queenside pressure, but he must remain alert:

a) It is tempting to leave White with the light-squared bishop and head for the c5-square, but 21...♖b7? does not work: 22 ♖d2 ♖c5 23 ♖g2 ♖b8 24 ♖fb1 a5 25 a3 and White took over in J.Timman-G.Kasparov, Tilburg 1981.

b) 21...♖xe4 is the main theoretical recommendation. 22 ♗xe4 f5 23 ♗c2 ♗xc4 appears to be sufficient for Black, but matters are not so clear: 24 ♖c1 ♗xd5 (Black may be better off leaving

the d-pawn alone with 24... $\text{b}5$ 25 $\text{d}2$ f4) 25 $\text{d}2$ (25 $\text{d}2$? looks more testing, because 25... $\text{e}4$ 26 $\text{xd}6$ $\text{xe}3$? 27 $\text{d}2$! gives White a winning position) 25...f4 26 $\text{f}1$ fxe3 27 $\text{xe}3$ $\text{f}3$ 28 $\text{e}1$ $\text{c}6$ 29 $\text{g}4$ $\text{d}4$ 30 $\text{hxh}6+$ $\text{g}7$ 31 $\text{d}2$ was D.Andrea-F.Lotti, correspondence 1985. Janjgava points out that 31... $\text{d}5$! would be very strong here.

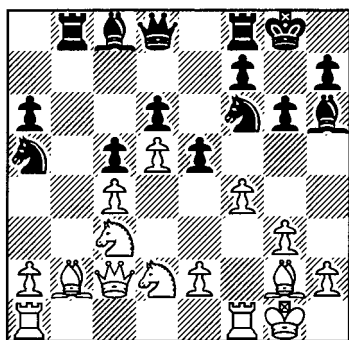
c) 21... $\text{xc}4$! may be the safest way to continue. The endgame is unclear after either 22 $\text{d}2$ $\text{xc}2$ 23 $\text{xc}2$ $\text{xd}5$ 24 $\text{e}4$ $\text{c}8$ 25 $\text{b}3$ $\text{c}3$ 26 $\text{xd}6$ $\text{c}7$ or 22 $\text{xc}4$ $\text{xc}4$ 23 $\text{d}3$ $\text{xe}3$! 24 fxe3 $\text{xe}3+$ 25 $\text{g}2$ $\text{xd}5$! with the idea of ... $\text{d}4$.

All of this is very interesting, but if Black is not happy with this there is always 12... $\text{h}6$.

B22) 14 f4

The main line. White shuts out the h6-bishop.

14...e5



Of course Black tries to pry the position open. White has three main lines here, but only the last of them gives him

any chance of achieving anything. In fact, after White's rook moves of the first two lines, Black has excellent chances to take over the game.

B221: 15 $\text{Ae}1$

B222: 15 $\text{Ab}1$

B223: 15 $\text{dxe}6$

Other moves are of little value to the first player:

a) 15 fxe5? $\text{g}4$ is good for Black.

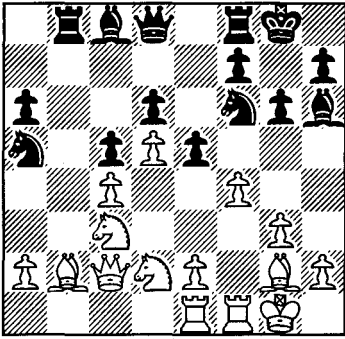
b) 15 $\text{d}1$ exf4 16 gxf4 $\text{h}5$ 17 e3 $\text{f}5$ gives Black the initiative. If 18 e4?! $\text{d}7$ and the f4-pawn is weak.

c) 15 $\text{ce}4$ $\text{xe}4$ 16 $\text{xe}4$ (or 16 $\text{xe}4$ exf4 17 gxf4 $\text{xf}4$) 18 $\text{xf}4$ $\text{g}5+$ 19 $\text{h}1$ $\text{xf}4$ with the idea 20 $\text{c}3$ $\text{xb}2$! 21 $\text{xb}2$ $\text{xc}4$! 16...f5 (16... $\text{xc}4$ 17 $\text{c}1$ is not so clear) 17 $\text{d}2$ (or 17 $\text{g}5$ $\text{xg}5$ 18 fxg5 $\text{xc}4$) 17...exf4 18 gxf4 $\text{e}8$ with an excellent game for Black.

d) 15 e3 exf4 16 gxf4 (16 exf4 $\text{g}7$ intending ... $\text{g}4$ or ... $\text{f}5$ is good for Black), and here rather than 16... $\text{e}8$ 17 $\text{Ae}1$ or 16... $\text{h}5$ 17 $\text{Ab}1$ (better than 17 $\text{Ae}1$?! $\text{g}7$ which is Line B221), I propose 16... $\text{g}4$! 17 $\text{Ae}1$ $\text{g}7$ which looks very good: for example, 18 $\text{d}1$ $\text{f}5$ 19 e4?! $\text{xb}2$! 20 $\text{xb}2$ $\text{d}4+$ 21 $\text{h}1$ $\text{hxh}2$! with a crushing attack against which White cannot defend.

B221) 15 $\text{Ae}1$

White tries to load up in the centre, but this leaves him vulnerable to ... $\text{xb}2$ tricks.



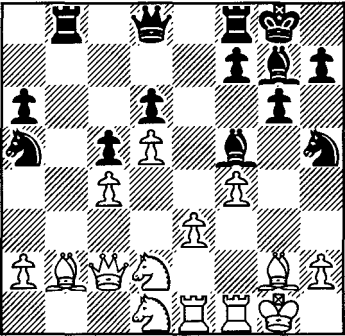
15...exf4 16 gxf4 h5! 17 e3 g7!

With a series of precise moves Black has enticed White to weaken his pawn formation.

18 d1

White attempts to shore up the sensitive b2 and e3 points. Both 18 Bb1 and 18 a1 would simply be met with 18...e8.

18...f5!



19 e4

Already White is completely off balance. If 19 e4xb2 20 dxb2 e8 leaves White in a crushing pin, so his choice is limited. Besides 19 e4, White has tried:

a) 19 c1xb2 20 dxb2 f6! 21 d1 d3 gives White big problems: for example, 22 f3 (or 22 f2xc4!, B.Ivkov-J.Smejkal, Novi Sad 1976) 22...dxc4! 23 e4 (the point is that after 23 dxc4 Black has 23...b1) 23...dxf4 24 dxc4 d4+ 25 f2 b1 and Black was winning in V.Neverov-R.Kasimdzhanov, Hoogeveen 1999.

b) 19 e4 is met with the thematic blow 19...xb2! 20 dxb2 d4+ 21 h1 h4 22 d3 and now:

b1) 22...d7 23 d1xf4 24 g3 xg3 25 hxg3 d3 26 e2 and now rather than 26...e5, which has been seen in practice and is indeed strong, Black has the precise 26...b8! when White's position will quickly fall apart.

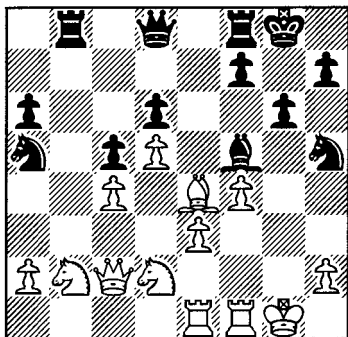
b2) 22...xf4 is also strong: 23 g3 (or 23 xf4 xf4 24 exf5xb2) 23...dxc4 24 h3+! 25 xh3 g5+ 26 h1 xd2 27 d3 dxc4 with a huge advantage in C.Navrotescu-D.Dumitrescu, Odorheiu Secuiesc 1993.

19...xb2

Also good is 19...xe4 20 dxe4xb2 21 dxb2 e8 22 f2?! (a better try was 22 d2, although Black still has a pleasant choice between 22...f5, 22...f6 and 22...h4) 22...f5 23 bd3 f6 and Black stood better in H.Ree-G.Sax, Amsterdam 1976.

20 dxb2

The untried 20 dxf5 g7 21 d3 is a better try to stay in the game, although Black is still very comfortable. The a5-knight may not have much to say, but White's position looks very loose.

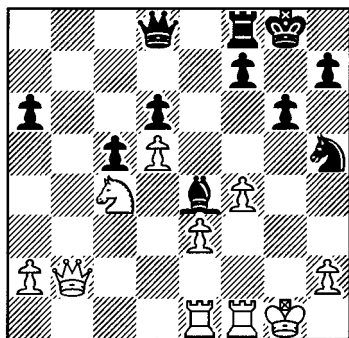


20... $\text{b}b2!$

Black can also play 20... $\text{e}e4$ 21 $\text{d}xe4$ which transposes to the note to his 19th move, above.

Worse, however, is 20... $\text{f}f6$ 21 $\text{d}d3$ (or 21 $\text{d}d1!$?) $\text{e}fe8$ 22 $\text{e}xf5$ $\text{w}xf5$ 23 $\text{f}f2$ (23 e4 $\text{w}g4+$ 24 $\text{c}h1$ $\text{d}g3+$ 25 $\text{h}xg3$ $\text{w}h3+$ with a draw has occurred several times before) 23... $\text{d}f6$ 24 $\text{w}c3$ $\text{d}e4?$! (24... $\text{d}b7$ is better) 25 $\text{w}xa5$ $\text{d}xf2$ 26 $\text{d}xf2$ $\text{b}b2$ 27 $\text{w}a4$ $\text{c}f8$ 28 $\text{d}f1$ when White should keep some advantage according to Kasparov.

21 $\text{w}xb2$ $\text{d}xc4$ 22 $\text{d}xc4$ $\text{e}xe4$



Black clearly has excellent compensation for the exchange. The d5-pawn is

weak and White's king is very uncomfortable.

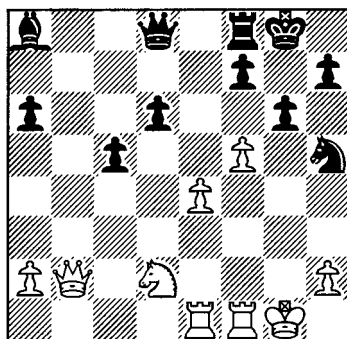
23 $\text{d}d2$

Instead 23 $\text{f}f2$ would be met with 23... $\text{w}d7!$.

23... $\text{e}e5$ 24 e4 $\text{e}a8$

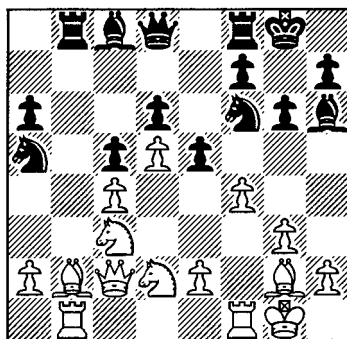
24... $\text{e}c6$ also looks promising.

25 f5



Now 25...d5 gave Black a strong initiative in M.Roiz-Shavtvaladze, Oropesa 1998. Instead 25... $\text{w}g5+$ 26 $\text{c}h1$ $\text{d}f4$ is also very strong. Black has a winning position after both 27 $\text{g}g1$ $\text{w}xf5$ and 27 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{w}g4$ intending ... $\text{e}e8$.

B222) 15 $\text{e}ab1$



White shores up his b2-bishop and may even retreat it to a1, but this move looks too slow.

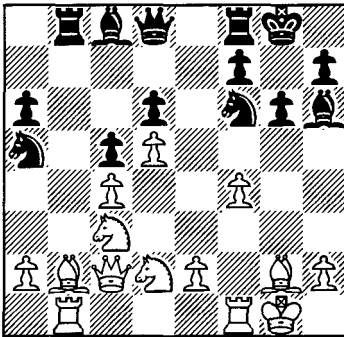
15...exf4

A murky alternative is 15...♖e8 16 ♘ce4 (if 16 fxe5 ♘g4) 16...♗xe4 17 ♗xe4 f5 and here:

a) 18 ♘g5 ♗xg5 19 fxg5 ♗d7 (bad is 19...♗xg5? 20 ♗c1, but 19...♗b4!? is possible) 20 ♗a1 ♖b4 (20...♗xg5!?) 21 ♖xb4 cxb4 22 c5 ♗b5 23 cxd6 (23 c6 ♗c4 is still good for Black, but this looks like a better try to complicate) 23...♗c4 was better for Black in M.Cebalo-J.Horvath, Porec 1998.

b) 18 ♗xe5!? is funny. After 18...♖xb1 19 ♗f6+ ♗f7 20 ♖xb1 dxe5 21 ♗xe8 exf4 the position is a mess.

16 gx4



16...♗g7!?

This untried move was suggested by Bologan. Not surprisingly, it is my computer's choice. The alternatives have been tested in practice, but they give White better chances for an advantage:

a) 16...♖e8 17 ♗ce4 ♗xe4 18 ♗xe4 (not 18 ♗xe4? ♗xf4!) and now:

a1) 18...♗f5 19 ♗f6 ♗xe4 (19...♗c7!?) 20 ♗xd8 ♗xc2 21 ♖xb8 ♗xc4 22 ♗c7 ♖xb8 23 ♗xb8 ♗e3 24 ♗xd6 ♗xf1 25 ♗xf1 and White converted his slight endgame edge in A.Ornstein-T.Ernst, Stockholm 1995.

a2) 18...♖xb2!? 19 ♖xb2 (19 ♖xb2 ♗f5 puts White in an annoying pin) 19...♗g7 20 ♖b6 (worse are 20 ♖c1 ♗f5 and 20 ♖c2 ♗f5) 20...♗xc4 21 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 22 ♖b8 ♗d4+ 23 ♗h1 ♗g7 24 ♖fb1 ♗e3? was Z.Ribli-V.Tkachiev, Porec 1998. Now 25 ♗xd6! would be very strong. Better would have been 24...♖f8 25 ♖a8 ♗f5 26 ♖xf8 ♗xf8, although White keeps some advantage here as well.

b) 16...♗h5 17 e3 (after 17 ♗ce4?! f5 18 ♗f6+ ♗xf6 19 ♗xf6 ♖xf6 20 ♖xb8 ♖d4+ 21 ♗h1 ♗xf4 Black had good compensation for the exchange in A.Czebe-Y.Zimmerman, Nagykanizsa 1995, but 17...♖b2! looks even stronger: for example, 18 ♖xb2 f5 19 ♖b6 ♖xb6 20 ♖b6 fxe4 21 e3 ♗xf4! 22 exf4 e3 with the idea of ...♗xc4 gives Black a winning position) and now:



b1) 17... $\text{e}f5$ 18 $\text{d}ce4$ $\text{e}xe4$ (18... $\text{e}e8!$?) was W.Watson-J.Nunn, Brighton 1983. Here White should play 19 $\text{e}xe4!$, keeping the knight on d2 and planning $\text{e}f3$ with some advantage.

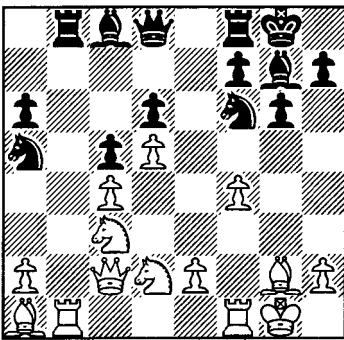
b2) 17... $\text{e}e8$ 18 $\text{d}ce4$ $\text{e}f5$ 19 $\text{e}c3$ (after 19 $\text{e}f3$ Black should play 19... $\text{e}g7!$) 19... $\text{e}xb1$ 20 $\text{e}xb1$ $\text{e}g7$ (or 20... $\text{e}xe4$ 21 $\text{e}xe4$ $\text{e}g7$ 22 $\text{e}f3$ $\text{e}xe3$ 23 $\text{e}xa5$ $\text{e}xa5$ 24 $\text{e}b8+$ $\text{e}f8$ 25 $\text{e}xh5$ $\text{e}c7$ 26 $\text{e}b2$ $\text{e}e7$, as in A.Czebe-L.Vadasz, Hungarian League 1995, when White should play 27 $\text{d}f1!$) 21 $\text{e}xg7$ $\text{e}xg7$ 22 $\text{e}c3+$ $\text{e}g8$ 23 $\text{e}f3$ looks good for White. He is not threatening to take on h5 just yet because of ... $\text{e}xe4$, but Black has no constructive moves.

17 $\text{e}a1$

Bologan shows that Black is okay after other moves:

a) 17 h3 $\text{d}h5$ 18 $\text{d}ce4$ $\text{e}xb2!$ 19 $\text{e}xb2$ f5 20 $\text{d}c3$ (20 $\text{d}g5$ $\text{d}xf4!$) 20... $\text{e}d4+$ 21 $\text{e}h2$ $\text{e}h4$ and White is busted.

b) 17 $\text{d}d1$ $\text{e}xb2$ 18 $\text{e}xb2$ (if 18 $\text{d}xb2$ $\text{d}g4$) 18... $\text{d}g4$ 19 h3 $\text{e}d4+$ 20 $\text{e}h1$ $\text{e}xb2$ 21 $\text{e}xb2$ $\text{d}f6$ 22 $\text{e}g1$ $\text{d}h5$ and Black stands well.



17... $\text{e}xb1$

Also interesting is 17... $\text{e}b4!$? and then:

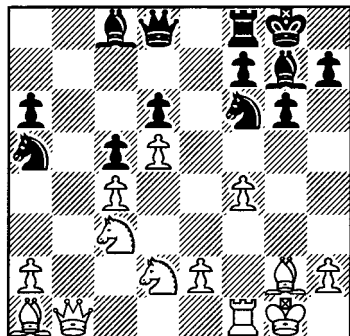
a) 18 $\text{d}d1$ $\text{e}g4!$? is rather annoying for White.

b) 18 $\text{e}xb4$ cxb4 19 $\text{d}ce4$ $\text{d}xe4$ 20 $\text{d}xe4$ $\text{e}xa1$ 21 $\text{e}xa1$ $\text{e}f5$ 22 c5 (Black was threatening ... $\text{d}b7$ -c5 so this move is positionally forced, but it fails) 22... $\text{e}e8$ 23 c6 $\text{e}b6+$ 24 $\text{e}h1$ $\text{e}d4$ 25 $\text{e}c1$ $\text{e}xe4!$ wins for Black.

c) 18 a3 $\text{e}xb1$ (or even 18... $\text{e}xc4!$? 19 $\text{d}xc4$ $\text{d}xc4$ with compensation) 19 $\text{e}xb1$ $\text{e}e8$ and it could be useful for Black to have weakened the b3-square.

18 $\text{e}xb1$

After 18 $\text{d}cxb1$ $\text{e}f5$ 19 e4 $\text{d}xe4$ 20 $\text{e}xe4$ (if 20 $\text{e}xg7$ $\text{d}xd2$) 20... $\text{e}xa1$ Black is equal according to Bologan. If we go a little further with 21 $\text{e}xf5$ $\text{e}d4+$ (21... $\text{g}xf5$ 22 $\text{d}c3$ $\text{e}xc3$ 23 $\text{e}xc3$ looks better for White) 22 $\text{e}h1$ $\text{g}xf5$ 23 $\text{d}f3$ (23 $\text{e}xf5$ $\text{e}e7$) 23... $\text{e}f6$ 24 $\text{e}g1+$ $\text{e}h8$ 25 $\text{d}bd2$ $\text{e}d7$ the position is unclear.



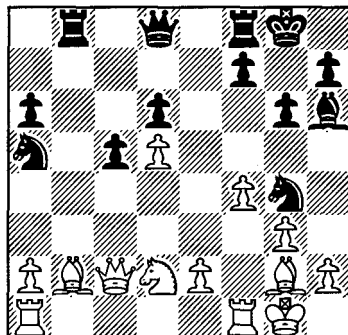
Now there are a couple of possibilities:

a) 18... $\text{d}g4$ is Bologan's idea. He

gives 19 ♖d1 ♔d4+! 20 ♗xd4 cxd4 21 ♜d3 ♜b6 22 ♗f3 ♗e3 23 ♗xe3 dxe3 24 ♜c1 ♜c5 25 ♜c3 ♜e8 26 ♜d4 ♗b7 with equality.

b) 18...♜e8!? is similar to variation 'c' in the notes to Black's 17th move, above. After 19 e4 (if 19 ♗ce4 ♗xe4 Black wins after 20 ♗xe4 ♗xa1 21 ♜xa1 ♗xc4 and 20 ♗xe4 ♗f5 21 ♗xg7 ♗xg7 22 ♜b2+ f6 is much better for him because of White's weaknesses on e4, c4 and e2) 19...♗g4!? Black has a nice position with ideas like ...♗d7 and ...♗h5.

stead 17...♜xb2 18 ♜xb2 ♗g4 19 ♜a3! is the note to Black's 18th move in Line B2231).

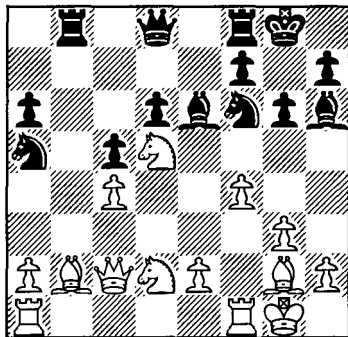


B223) 15 dxe6

This is certainly the best try.

15...♗xe6 16 ♗d5

Too passive is 16 ♗d1 ♗g7 17 ♜b1 ♜e8. With the centre open White cannot afford to retreat his pieces to the back rank.



16...♜xb2!

This looks like the best move, but Black can also consider 16...♗xd5 17 cxd5 (17 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 18 cxd5 ♜xb2 19 ♜xb2 ♗g7 leads to the note to White's 19th move in Line B2232) 17...♗g4 (in-

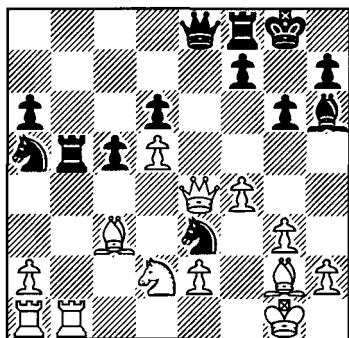
Now:

a) 18 ♜c3 ♜xb2! 19 ♜xb2 ♗g7 gives White nothing.

b) 18 ♜f3 ♜xb2! 19 ♜xb2 ♗g7 20 ♜c1 ♗xa1 21 ♜xa1 ♜e8 22 ♜c3 (or 22 e4 ♜b6) 22...♜xe2 favours Black, T.Anton-S.Vedmediuc, Timisoara 2009.

c) 18 ♜ac1 ♗e3 19 ♜c3 ♜xb2 20 ♜xb2 ♗g7 21 ♜a3 ♜e8!? (safer is 21...♗xf1 22 ♗xf1 ♜c7) 22 ♜fe1 ♗d4 23 ♗h1 ♗xg2 (after 23...♗g4 24 ♗f3 ♗e3 25 ♗xg4 ♗xd2 26 e4 ♗xe1 27 ♜xe1 ♜b6 28 e5 White has the initiative) 24 ♗xg2 ♜e3 25 ♜a4 ♜e7 26 ♗f3?! (26 ♗f1! looks good for White) 26...♜e4 gave Black the initiative in R.Paramos Dominguez-B.Jobava, Ubeda 2001.

d) 18 ♗c3 ♗e3 19 ♜a4 ♜b5 (19...♗b7 is sad) 20 ♜fb1 ♜e8 (20...♗g7 21 ♗xg7 ♜xb1+ 22 ♜xb1 ♗xg7 23 ♜a3 ♜e8 24 ♗e4 ♗g4 25 h3 ♗f6 26 ♗f3 favoured White in I.Csom-T.Ghitescu, Moscow 1977) 21 ♜e4 (not 21 ♜xb5 axb5 22 ♗e4 ♗g7!) leaves Black in trouble.



Following 21... $\Delta ac4$ (or 21... $\Delta g7$ 22 $\Delta xg7$ $\Delta xg7$ 23 $\Delta d3!$ $\Delta xg2$ 24 $\Delta xg2$ and Black has not solved the problem of his a5-knight) 22 $\Delta xc4$ $\Delta xe4$ 23 $\Delta xe4$ $\Delta xc4$ 24 $\Delta d3$ $\Delta xb1+$ 25 $\Delta xb1$ $\Delta e3$ 26 $\Delta d2$ (not 26 $\Delta xa6$ $\Delta a8$) 26... $\Delta xd5$ 27 $\Delta f2$ White will regain the pawn and have an enduring advantage in the endgame with his bishop-pair.

e) It seems strange to trade off the knight, but 18 $\Delta b3$ looks good for White after 18... $\Delta xb3$ (18...f5 may be better, but does not equalize: 19 h3 $\Delta f6$ 20 $\Delta d2$ $\Delta h5$ 21 $\Delta h2$ was I.Stohl-S.Kindermann, Dortmund 1991, where the a5-knight remained a problem) 19 $\Delta xb3$ $\Delta b6$ 20 $\Delta c3$ and now:

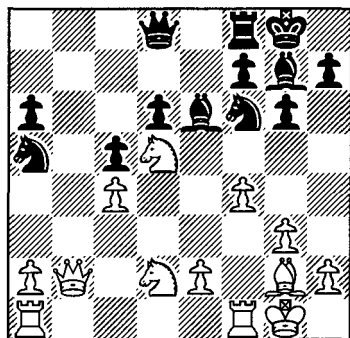
e1) 20...f6 21 $\Delta h3$ $\Delta xb3$ 22 $\Delta fb1$ $\Delta xc3$ 23 $\Delta xc3$ f5 24 $\Delta xb8$ $\Delta xb8$ 25 $\Delta xg4$ $\Delta xg4$ 26 $\Delta xa6$ $\Delta f8$ was drawn here in A.Satici-A.Albano, correspondence 2000, but 27 e4 $\Delta b1+$ 28 $\Delta f2$ clearly favours White.

e2) 20...c4+ 21 $\Delta h1$ f6 22 $\Delta h3$ $\Delta f2+$ 23 $\Delta xf2$ $\Delta xf2$ 24 $\Delta xc4$ (24 $\Delta e6+$ $\Delta h8$ 25 $\Delta xc4$ $\Delta e3!$ 26 $\Delta d4$ $\Delta e4+$ 27 $\Delta g1$ $\Delta g7$ was unclear in M.Marin-K.Movsziszian,

Berga 1996) 24... $\Delta e3$ 25 $\Delta d4$ $\Delta e4+$ 26 $\Delta g2$ $\Delta e7$ 27 $\Delta xa6$ f5 28 $\Delta f3$ $\Delta g7$ was M.Marin-A.Jerez Perez, Sitges 2000. Now the funny 29 $\Delta c5!$? $\Delta fd8$ 30 $\Delta c6$ $\Delta h8$ 31 $\Delta b6$ looks very good for White.

Black will have to improve on lines 'd' and 'e' for 16... $\Delta xd5$ to prove viable.

17 $\Delta xb2$ $\Delta g7$



Now Black threatens ... $\Delta xd5$, so White must move the queen. In general Black should think carefully about regaining the exchange. If the a5-knight cannot get into the game, the simplification will favour White, who will be able to use his extra piece on the king-side. Black must generally rely on tactics, both on the dark squares and against the c4-pawn. We have:

B2231: 18 $\Delta a3$

B2232: 18 $\Delta c1$

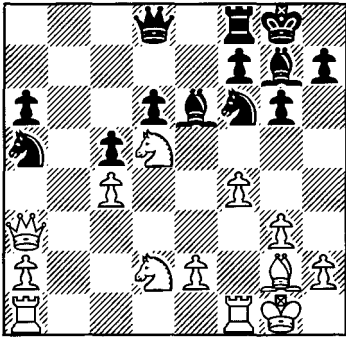
Instead 18 $\Delta c2$ does not cause Black any problems after 18... $\Delta xd5$ 19 $\Delta xd5$ $\Delta xa1$ 20 $\Delta xa1$ (20 $\Delta xe6$ $\Delta d4+$ 21 $\Delta h1$ $\Delta xe6$ 22 $\Delta d3$ may be a better try to equalize) 20... $\Delta f6$ 21 $\Delta d1$ $\Delta d4+$ 22 $\Delta h1$

♙f5! (not 22...♙xd5 23 ♙xd5 ♚xd5+ 24 ♖e4 ♚b7 25 ♙g1! when White had some initiative in Ki.Georgiev-J.Van der Wiel, Wijk aan Zee 1985) and now:

a) 23 ♙e4? ♖c4! 24 ♚d3 ♚xd3 25 exd3 ♙g4 is good for Black: for example, 26 ♙f3 ♙xf3+ 27 ♖xf3 ♖e3 28 ♜b1 ♖xd5 and Black was a pawn to the good in Ki.Georgiev-J.Piket, Amsterdam 1985.

b) 23 e4 ♙g4 24 ♙f3?! (this is bad, but Black has excellent compensation after both 24 ♜b1 c4 and 24 ♖f3 ♚e3) 24...♖c4! 25 ♙xg4 ♖e3 26 ♖b3 ♚a4 27 ♚e2 ♖xd1 28 ♚xd1 ♚xe4+ 29 ♙f3 ♚a4 and the passed c-pawn gave Black the upper hand in D.Bogdan-I.Cosma, Romanian Championship 1992.

B2231) 18 ♚a3



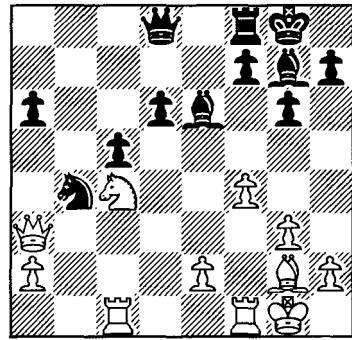
White wants to stay in touch with the a5-knight, but Black has a tactical solution.

18...♖xc4!

Worse is 18...♙xd5?! 19 cxd5 ♖g4 20 ♜ab1 ♖e3 21 ♜fc1 ♜e8 22 ♙f3 ♙d4 23 ♙h1 h5 24 ♚a4! (White again focuses on the a5-knight; instead 24 ♚d3 h4 25

♖e4?! hxg3 26 ♖xg3 ♚h4 27 ♚xa6 ♙g7 gave Black counterchances in M.Romanko-D.Petrosian, Moscow 2011) 24...♙g7 (if 24...h4 25 ♖f1) 25 ♖f1 h4 26 ♖xe3 ♙xe3 27 ♜c3 hxg3 28 hxg3 c4 29 ♜a3! ♙d2 30 ♚c2 c3 31 ♜xc3! ♙xc3 32 ♚xc3+ f6 33 g4 with a winning position for White in M.Luch-P.Kolosowski, Dzwirzyno 2004.

19 ♖xc4 ♖xd5 20 ♜ac1 ♖b4



Black's active pieces and centre pawns give him good compensation for the exchange.

21 ♜fd1

White has not had much success with the alternatives:

a) 21 ♙h1 d5 and now:

a1) 22 ♖b2 ♚d6 23 ♖d3 (23 ♜fd1 ♙xb2! 24 ♚xb2 d4 gave Black very good compensation for the exchange in R.Hübner-J.Nunn, Wijk aan Zee 1982) 23...♖xd3 24 exd3 ♙d4 25 ♜b1 h5 with good play in B.Badea-Y.Zimmerman, Ajka 1992.

a2) 22 ♖e5 ♙xe5 (better than 22...♚d6 23 ♚a5) 23 fxe5 ♚b6 24 ♚b2 ♚a7 25 ♜f6 (Janjgava suggests 25 ♚d2,

but Black still has good compensation) 25...♖b8 (the immediate 25...d4 may be even better) 26 ♗d2 d4 and Black had sufficient play in I.Cosma-V.Nevednichy, Bucharest 1994.

b) After 21 e4 ♗d4+ 22 ♖h1, 22...d5!? is hardly forced but it is not bad either:

b1) 23 exd5 ♗xd5 24 ♗xd5 ♗xd5+ 25 ♗f3 ♗xf3+ 26 ♖xf3 ♖xa2 is fairly level.

b2) 23 ♖d2 dxe4 24 ♖xe4 was P.Tregubov-Y.Zimmerman, Balatonbereny 1992. Now 24...♗d5! would give Black the initiative.

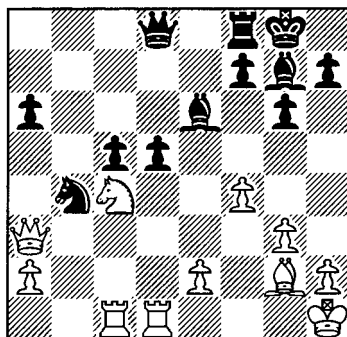
b3) 23 f5 dxc4 24 fxe6 ♖d3 25 exf7+ ♖xf7 26 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 27 ♖f1+ ♖f2+ 28 ♖g1 ♗f6 29 ♗f3 was given as equal by Zimmerman, but Black has 29...c3!. White should instead settle for 29 e5 ♖g4+ 30 ♖h1 ♖f2+ 31 ♖g1 with a draw. **21...d5 22 ♖h1**

Black is also not troubled by knight moves:

a) 22 ♖e5 ♗xe5 (22...♗b6!?) 23 fxe5 ♗b6 24 ♗b2 c4+ 25 ♖h1 ♗c5 26 ♖b1 ♖b8 27 ♗c3 ♖b5! 28 a3 ♖c6 29 ♖xb5 axb5 30 e3 h5 and Black had enough for the exchange in D.Paunovic-D.Simic, Kragujevac 2000.

b) 22 ♖b2 ♗e7 (not 22...♗b6? 23 ♖a4) 23 ♖d3 ♗d4+ 24 ♖h1 ♗e3 25 ♖b1 ♗f5 (Black could also fight with 25...♖xd3 when both 26 ♖xd3 d4 and 26 ♗xd3 ♗f5 look good for him, although 26 exd3 ♗a7 is unclear) 26 ♖xb4 (not 26 ♖xb4 cxb4 27 ♗xb4 ♗e6 when Black is better) 26...cxb4 27 ♗xb4 ♗c5 28 ♗b7 ♗xb1 29 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 30 ♖xb1 ♖d8 31

♖b6 ♖d6 32 ♖xd6 ♗xd6 33 ♗xd5 ♖f8 and Black easily drew the ending in J.Hjartarson-I.Stohl, Groningen 1981.



22...♗e7

Alternatively:

a) 22...♗b8 is also viable: for example, 23 ♖e5 (23 ♖b2?! ♖c8 24 ♖d3 ♖xd3 25 ♗xd3 c4 gives Black the initiative) 23...♗xe5 24 fxe5 ♗xe5 25 ♖xc5 ♗xe2 (Nunn).

b) The queen sacrifice 22...dxc4 is very interesting, but it is probably asking too much of the position after 23 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 24 ♗a5 ♖d2 and now:

b1) 25 a3 c3 26 axb4 c2 27 ♖f1 (27 ♗a4 ♗d7!) 27...♖d1 28 ♗xc5 ♗f5 29 e4 ♖xf1+ 30 ♗xf1 ♗xe4+ 31 ♗g2 (not 31 ♖g1?? c1♗! 32 ♗xc1 ♗d4+ mating!) 31...♗b2 draws.

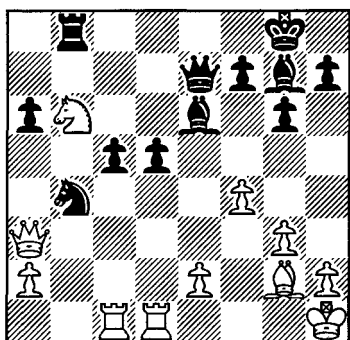
b2) 25 ♗xc5 ♖xa2 26 ♖b1 ♗b2 27 ♗e3 (not 27 g4?! c3 28 ♗e5?, as in A.Wojtkiewicz-M.Marin, Stara Zagora 1990, because 28...c2 29 ♗b8+ ♖g7 30 ♗xb2+ f6 would have favoured Black) 27...c3 28 ♗e4! and the complications favoured White in A.Baburin-R.Polzin, Gifhorn 1992.

23 ♖b6

Instead 23 ♖b2?! ♗xb2 (23...c4! would keep White tied up and is even stronger) 24 ♖xb2 d4 gave Black compensation in Nedochotov-Y.Zimmerman, Russia 1993. Black is also doing well after 23 ♖e5 ♗xe5 24 fxe5 ♖b8 (or 24...d4) 25 ♖a4 d4 26 a3 ♖d5 27 ♖xa6 ♖e3 28 ♖b1 ♗e8 with a big advantage in J.Just-H.Ude, correspondence 1996.

23...♖b8

Also possible is 23...d4 24 ♖a5 c4 25 ♖xc4 ♗xc4 26 ♖xc4 ♖xe2 27 ♖dc1 d3 28 ♗f1 ♖f3+ 29 ♗g2 ♖e2 30 ♗f1 when Black should acquiesce to a draw because 30...♖f2? 31 ♖c5 favoured White in A.Baryshpolets-M.Erdogdu, Olomouc 2008.



Black has good compensation and White should look to maintain the balance. Some examples:

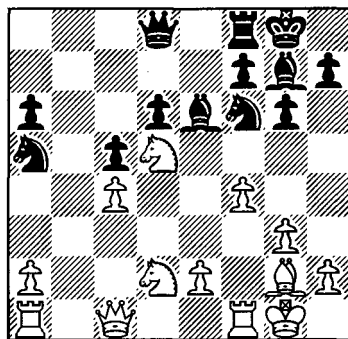
a) 24 ♖a5? ♖d8! was winning for Black in A.Rustemov-A.Fedorov, Minsk 1993.

b) 24 ♖a4? ♖b5 (or 24...c4!?) 25 ♖e3 d4 26 ♖e4 ♖f8 27 ♖a8 ♖xa8 28 ♗xa8 c4 and Black had more than enough for

the exchange in M.Kurtovic-I.Burovic, Ljubljana 1992.

c) 24 ♖xd5 ♗xd5 25 ♖xd5 (but not 25 ♗xd5?? ♖xd5 26 ♖xd5 ♗b2) is the most sensible course. The position is equal after 25...♖xd5 26 ♗xd5.

B2232) 18 ♖c1



This has been White's main attempt to prove something in the main line, but Black has adequate resources.

18...♗xd5

Standard, but Black has a couple of other ideas that are worth a look:

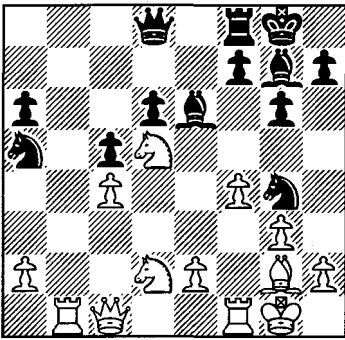
a) 18...♖xd5 19 cxd5 ♗d7 (worse is 19...♗xa1 20 ♖xa1 with the idea of e4 when Black has not solved the problem of his a5-knight) and here:

a1) 20 e4?! c4! 21 ♖b1 (not 21 ♖xc4? ♗xa1 22 ♖xa5 ♗d4+) 21...c3 22 ♖f3 ♖c7 23 ♖e3 ♖c4 24 ♖f2 ♗g4 25 ♖bc1 ♗xf3 26 ♗xf3 ♖a5 and Black had the initiative in D.Palo-V.Nevednichy, Gotherburg 2005.

a2) 20 ♖b1 ♗d4+ (Black could also consider 20...♗b5!? or 20...♖c7!?, which has been tried a couple of times in cor-

response games; after 21 a3 c4 22 e4 f5 23 bc1 xe4 24 xe4 c3 25 h1 c8 Black has reasonable compensation for the exchange) 21 h1 b5 22 e1 e3 23 c3 e8 24 e4 d4 25 c1 ! and Black was pushed back in M.Marín-V.Nevednichy, Bucharest (rapid) 2006.

b) 18... g4 !? 19 b1 and now 19... xd5 ?! 20 xd5 is insufficient, so Black must maintain the tension:

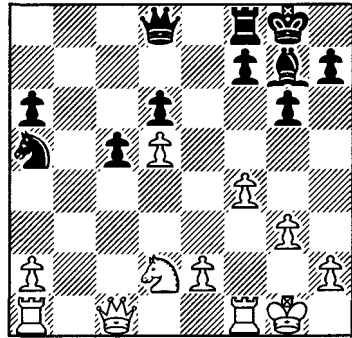


b1) 19... d4+ 20 h1 e3 (instead 20... xd5 21 xd5 is still good for White and 20... f2+ 21 xf2 xf2 22 a3 leaves Black suffering because of the a5-knight) 21 xe3 xe3 22 c2 xd2 23 xd2 xc4 24 d3 d5 was Y.Anikaev-M.Gurevich, Severodonetsk 1982. Although Black managed to win, his compensation looks insufficient at this point.

b2) 19... e8 20 e4 d4+ (or 20...f5 21 h1 !?) 21 h1 f2+ 22 xf2 xf2 23 f3 has been seen a few times. White maintains some advantage because of his well-centralized position and the shaky position of the f2-bishop.

19 cxd5

Instead 19 xd5 xd5 20 cxd5 gives Black several possibilities, but he must be careful that the a5-knight does not become a mere spectator.



a) 20... xa1 21 xa1 e8 22 e4 and White's central play gave him some advantage in F.Izeta Txabarri-D.Anagnostopoulos, Paris 1996.

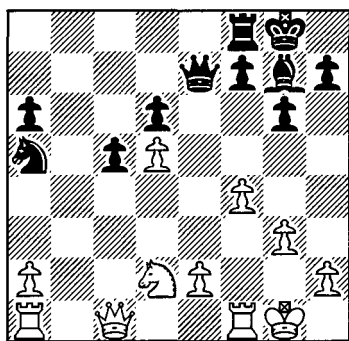
b) 20... e8 21 e4 (if 21 b1 ! xe2) 21... d4+ 22 h1 f5 23 e1 (better than 23 xf5 xa1 24 xa1 a8 ! with counterplay) 23... a8 24 b1 fxe4 25 xe4 xd5 26 c2 c4 27 g2 ! was good for White in L.Seres-Z.Ballai, Hungarian League 2001.

c) 20... f6 21 c2 ! d4+ 22 g2 e8 (22... xd5+ 23 e4) 23 e4 left White clearly on top in F.Izeta Txabarri-M.Pavlovic, Ubeda 1997.

d) 20...c4!? 21 e4 e8 22 c3 d4+ (Black could consider 22... b6+ 23 h1 c5) 23 g2 e3 24 f3 ?! xc3 25 xc3 f6 was good for Black in S.Estremera Panos-A.Romero Holmes, Linares 1998, but 24 d2 ! could have caused him some problems.

e) 20...♔d4+ 21 ♖h1 (not 21 ♖g2?! ♜e8! with ideas like 22 ♜b1 ♜xe2+ 23 ♖h1 ♜d3 and the 22 e4? ♔xa1 23 ♜xa1 ♝c4! of I.Stohl-V.Babula, Zlin 1995) 21...♜a8 22 e4 and now 22...f5?! 23 ♜b1 fxe4 24 ♝e4 ♜xd5 25 ♜c2 ♝c4 26 ♜fe1 ♝e3 27 ♜b3 c4 28 ♜b7 favoured White in I.Stohl-V.Babula, Czech League 1997. A better try would have been 22...♔xa1 23 ♜xa1 f5 24 ♜c3 fxe4! 25 ♜xa5 ♜xd5 with compensation for the piece.

f) 20...♜e7 looks best.



White has:

f1) 21 ♜c2? ♜e3+ 22 ♖h1 ♔xa1 23 ♜xa1 ♜xe2 was winning for Black in M.Leski-S.Kindermann, Portoroz 1998.

f2) 21 ♜a3?! ♔d4+ 22 ♖h1 ♔xa1 23 ♜xa5 (or 23 ♜xa1 ♝c4!) 23...♔g7 24 ♜xa6 ♜e8 and Black has a strong initiative for the pawn.

f3) 21 ♜b1 ♜xe2 22 ♜d1 ♜e3+ 23 ♖h1 and now:

f31) 23...c4?! 24 ♜e1 left Black somewhat uncoordinated in I.Stohl-S.Kindermann, German League 1997.

f32) 23...♝c4 24 ♝xc4 ♜e4+ 25 ♜f3 ♜xc4 looks okay for Black.

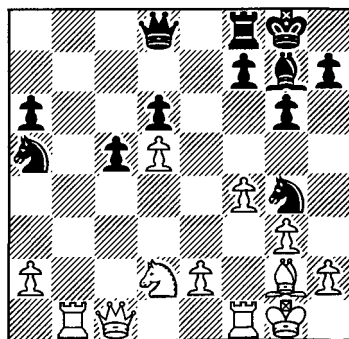
f33) 23...♔c3!? 24 ♝b3 (or 24 ♝f3 ♜e4 with the idea of ...♝c4) 24...♝xb3 and Black has enough for the exchange after 25 axb3 ♜e8 or 25 ♜xb3 c4.

19...♝g4 20 ♜b1

White's other moves do not look very challenging:

a) 20 ♝e4 ♝e3 (20...♔d4+!? 21 ♖h1 ♜e8 maintains the tension and gives Black good chances) 21 ♜f3 (if 21 ♜b1 ♜e8!) 21...♝ac4! 22 ♜b1 ♜e8 23 ♝d2 ♝b6! won the d5-pawn and gave Black good play in V.Filippov-A.Fedorov, Minsk 1996.

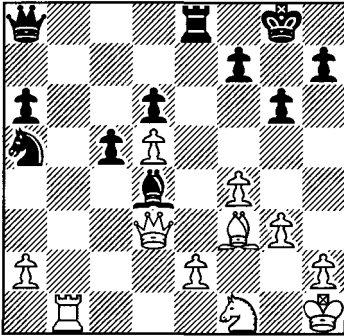
b) 20 e4 ♔xa1 (20...♔d4+ 21 ♖h1 ♝f2+ 22 ♜xf2 ♔xf2 23 ♜b1 looks a bit better for White, but 20...c4!? is interesting) 21 ♜xa1 ♜b6 22 e5?! (22 ♜b1 and 22 ♜c3 are better tries) 22...c4+ 23 ♖h1 ♝f2+ (or 23...dxe5 24 fxe5 ♝f2+ 25 ♜xf2 ♜xf2 26 ♝e4 ♜e2) 24 ♜xf2 ♜xf2 25 ♝e4 was V.Filippov-V.Shinkevich, Tomsk 1997. Here 25...♜e3 would have been very strong.



20...♝e3

This looks best. The alternative is 20...♔d4+ 21 ♖h1 ♝e3 (even worse is

the superficial 21... $\text{d}f2+$ 22 $\text{f}x2$ $\text{d}x2$ 23 $\text{d}f3$ c4 24 e4 $\text{c}7$ 25 $\text{c}2$ $\text{a}7$ 26 $\text{c}3!$ $\text{b}8$ 27 $\text{f}xb8+$ $\text{d}xb8$ 28 h4 $\text{a}7$ 29 h5 when White's preponderance of power in the centre and on the kingside gave him the upper hand in M.Marin-A.Istratescu, Bucharest 1995) 22 $\text{a}3$ (this is the only move ever played, but White has some other possibilities, such as 22 $\text{e}1$ and 22 $\text{d}f3$) 22... $\text{e}8$ 23 $\text{d}3$ $\text{a}8$ (after 23... $\text{d}xf1$ 24 $\text{d}xf1$ the a6-pawn and a5-knight are liabilities) 24 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{d}xf1$ 25 $\text{d}xf1$ when Black has:



a) 25... $\text{b}8$ 26 $\text{f}xb8+$ $\text{w}xb8$ and:

a1) 27 $\text{a}6$ $\text{c}7$ 28 e3 $\text{d}f6$ 29 $\text{d}2$ c4 30 $\text{d}e4$ $\text{e}7$ 31 $\text{d}c3$ $\text{c}5$ 32 $\text{g}2$ and White was better in A.Antunes-F.Izeta Txabarri, Tunis 1997, but Black could have considered 28... $\text{d}c3!$?

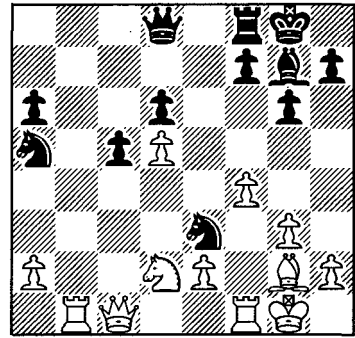
a2) 27 e3 $\text{d}f6$ 28 $\text{a}6$ $\text{b}1$ (28... $\text{d}c3!$? is a better try) 29 $\text{g}1$ c4 30 $\text{a}5$ c3 31 $\text{a}6!$ was F.Izeta Txabarri-L.Andrada Andrada, Torrevieja 1997. Izeta seems to like this position for both colours.

b) 25... $\text{a}7$ 26 $\text{d}2$ $\text{e}3$ 27 $\text{c}2$ and:

b1) 27... $\text{f}5!$? 28 $\text{a}4$ $\text{c}7$ 29 g4 fxg4

30 $\text{d}xg4$ $\text{g}7$ 31 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{d}f6$ 32 $\text{e}6$ c4 33 f5 $\text{d}xe2$ 34 $\text{g}1$ $\text{f}f2??$ (34... $\text{d}8$) 35 $\text{e}8$ 1-0 A.Yusupov-S.Kindermann, Baden 1992. This game put black players off the Panno for a while.

b2) 27... $\text{a}3$ 28 $\text{d}e4$ $\text{c}7$ 29 g4 $\text{d}8$ 30 g5 $\text{d}g7$ 31 h4 was also good for White in K.Kolehmainen-E.Borrioni, correspondence 2004. This game illustrates a typical idea – if Black cannot generate any counterplay, White can just gradually advance on the kingside.



21 $\text{e}1$

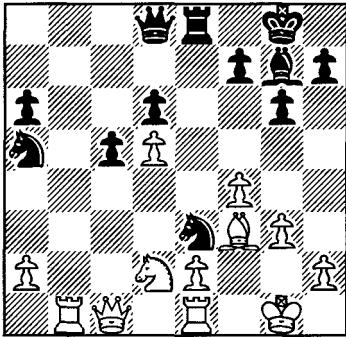
Instead 21 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{e}8$ 22 $\text{e}1$ will transpose, while 21 $\text{a}3$ $\text{e}8$ 22 $\text{f}2$ $\text{d}g4$ gives Black good play. The main alternative is 21 $\text{f}3$ $\text{e}8$ 22 $\text{d}f1$ and here:

a) 22... $\text{d}d5$ 23 $\text{a}3$ $\text{d}b4$ 24 e4 (24 e3 is a better try) 24... $\text{d}ac6$ 25 $\text{d}e3$ $\text{d}d4$ gave Black decent compensation for the material in I.Kostenko-T.Markowski, Katowice 1993.

b) 22... $\text{d}xg2$ 23 $\text{d}xg2?!$ (23 $\text{d}1$ was suggested by Janjgava, but 23... $\text{d}xf4!$? looks okay for Black) 23... $\text{d}xe2+$ 24 $\text{f}2$ $\text{e}8$ 25 $\text{d}xe2$ $\text{d}xe2+$ 26 $\text{h}3$ $\text{h}5+$ 27

♔g2 ♖xd5+ 28 ♔h3 was W.Unzicker-S.Kindermann, German League 1996. Now 28...♗c6! leaves Black with two pawns and an ongoing attack for the exchange.

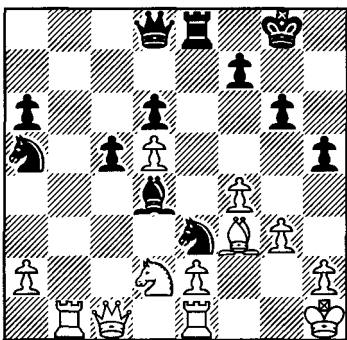
21...♞e8 22 ♕f3



22...♕d4

Janjgava only mentions 22...g5? 23 fxg5 ♖xg5 24 ♖a3 (24 ♖b6 is also good), when both 24...♗ec4?! 25 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 26 ♖xa6 ♕d4+ and 24...♗c2 25 ♖xa5 ♗xe1 26 ♖xe1 ♖e3+ 27 ♔h1 ♕c3 28 ♖xa6 ♖xd2 give Black chances for creating counterplay, although White should be able to realize his extra material.

23 ♔h1 h5!



Black simply 'pretends' he is not down material and plays a useful move. He wants to open the h-file and play ...♔g7 and ...♞h8.

24 ♖a3

White does not mind returning the exchange if he can consolidate his position, especially if the a5-knight cannot enter the fray. Instead both 24 ♗e4 ♔g7 (or 24...h4 25 g4 ♗ac4) 25 ♗g5 h4 and 24 ♖g1 h4 25 g4 ♔g7 26 g5 ♖d7 allow Black to create counterplay.

24...h4

Instead after 24...♗c2!? 25 ♖d3 ♗xe1 26 ♖xe1 ♖e3 (26...♖c8 27 e3 helps White consolidate a bit) 27 ♖xa6 c4? 28 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 29 ♖xc4 ♕c5 30 ♖b1 White was well on top in Z.Nemeth-N.Resika, Budapest 2001. However, 27...♕c3! 28 ♖d1 ♕xd2 29 ♖xd2 ♖c3! with ideas like ...♖c1+ and ...♗c4 was a better try.

25 g4

White should avoid 25 ♖d3?! hxg3 26 hxg3? ♖f6! with the idea of ...♖h8+, while 25 gxh4 allows 25...♖xh4!? when 26 ♖xa5? ♔g7 gives Black a very strong attack. The text move keeps the h-file closed, but now the f4-pawn is weak. Black's h-pawn may also be able to trouble White's king.

25...♗c2 26 ♖a4

Or 26 ♖d3 ♗xe1 27 ♖xe1 ♕e3! 28 f5 ♕xd2 29 ♖xd2 ♗c4 and Black's knight is suddenly a very strong piece.

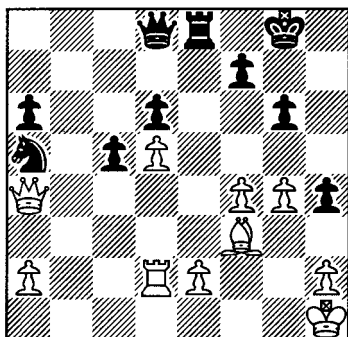
26...♗xe1 27 ♖xe1 ♕e3

27...♕c3 may be more accurate. Then 28 ♖d1 ♕xd2 29 ♖xd2 would transpose to the game.

28 Bd1

White could have tried 28 e4!?

28...exd2 29 Bxd2



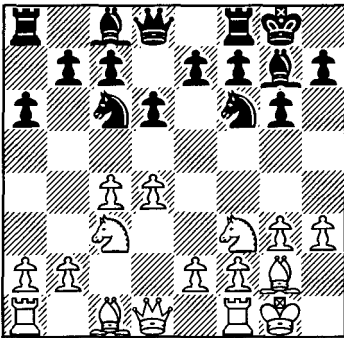
Now after 29...e7 30 Bb2 e3 31 g5 Bc3 32 Bc2 Bxc2 33 Wxc2 Wb6 34 f5 White's initiative endured in D.Rogozenko-A.Motylev, Bucharest 2000. Instead after 29...e3!? 30 Bd3 (or 30 g2 Bc3 intending ...c4 or ...Bc4) 30...Bxd3 31 exd3 Stohl suggests 31...Wb6, while I like the look of 31...h3!? when White's king is uncomfortable and Black has good chances.

Chapter 2

Panno Variation

7 Nc3 a6 8 h3 Bb8 9 e4

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nf3 Bg7 4 g3 0-0 5
 Bg2 d6 6 0-0 Nc6 7 Nc3 a6 8 h3



If White does not want to head into the Yugoslav Variation, both sides remain very flexible. This advance is typical for White in the Fianchetto Variation in general and here it is White's most popular option. The move can be played as preparation for e4 because it prevents ... Bg4 , while White may also play Be3 because ... Ng4 has been prevented.

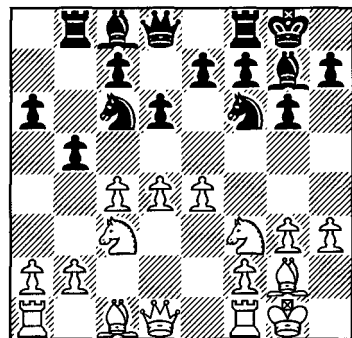
Now the main continuation is the consistent 8... Bb8 , which leads to sharp

play. Black can also consider the solid 8... Bd7 , which will be covered in the next chapter.

8... Bb8 9 e4

This is the most principled approach. White hopes to overrun Black in the centre. Other moves will be considered in Chapter 3.

9...b5

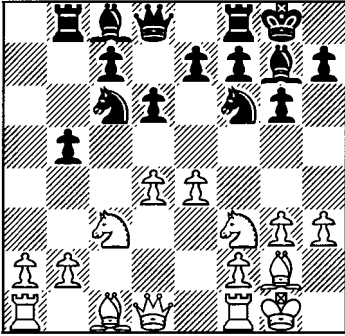


Black continues with his plan, not fearing the advance of the White e-pawn. Now White can play solidly or offer to enter into complications.

A: 10 cxb5

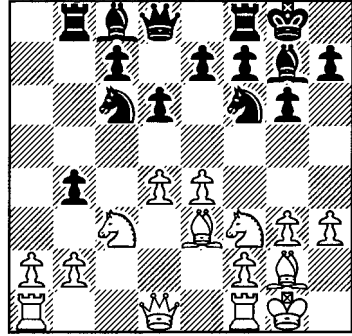
B: 10 e5

A) 10 cxb5 axb5



a huge initiative) 21...dxe4 22 ♙xg7 ♜b6+ 23 ♖h2 e3 24 ♜e1 ♖xg7 with a huge advantage for Black in R.Hanel- S.Atalik, Kranevo 1996.

b) 11 ♙e3 b4 and then:



11 ♜e1

This is White's most common choice and this move was advocated by Avrukh. Instead both 11 a3 b4 12 axb4 ♖xb4 and 11 ♜c2 b4 12 ♖e2 ♖a5 (or 12...♙d7) look comfortable for Black, but there are some other options, including an attempt to transpose to Line B:

a) 11 d5 b4! (stronger than 11...♖a5 12 b4 ♖c4 13 ♖d4) 12 ♖e2 ♖a5 13 ♖fd4 (after 13 ♜c2 ♙d7 14 ♖ed4 ♜c8 15 ♖h2 c5 16 dxc6 ♖xc6 17 ♙e3 ♖xd4 18 ♖xd4 ♜xc2 19 ♖xc2 ♜fc8 Black had the initiative in A.Simutowe-M.Hebden, Millfield 2000) 13...c5! (this thrust, combined with Black's next, is a common theme) 14 dxc6 e5! 15 ♖b3 ♖xc6 is comfortable for Black: for example, 16 ♙g5 h6 17 ♙e3 ♙b7 18 ♜d2 ♖a5! 19 ♖xa5 ♜xa5 20 f3 d5! 21 ♙xh6 (after 21 exd5 ♖xd5 22 ♙xh6 ♙xh6 23 ♜xh6 ♜b6+ with the idea of ...♖e3 gives Black

b1) 12 ♖e2 ♖a5 13 ♖d2 ♖d7 14 ♜c1 c5 15 b3 ♙a6 gives Black a nice position: 16 ♖f3 (if White grabs the pawn with 16 dxc5 ♖xc5 17 ♙xc5 dxc5 18 ♜xc5 then 18...♜b6 intending ...♜fd8 gives Black tremendous play), and here Black has several attractive ideas, such as 16...c4, 16...♖c6 or 16...cxd4 17 ♖fxd4 ♖c5.

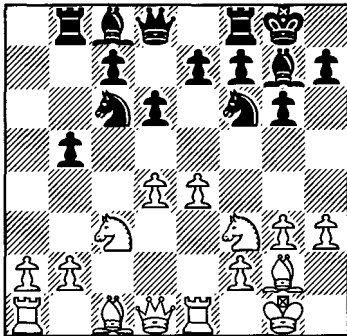
b2) 12 ♖d5 ♖xe4! (it looks like Black is falling for a trap, but that is not the case) 13 ♜c2 e6 14 ♜xc6 (or 14 ♜xe4 ♙b7!) 14...♙b7 15 ♜xc7 ♙xd5 16 ♜fc1 ♜xc7 (Zapata suggests 16...♜e8 with the idea of ...♜b7) 17 ♜xc7 was U.Adianto-A.Zapata, Jakarta 1986. Now 17...f5! gives Black a good game.

c) Compared to Line B, 11 e5 looks a bit inaccurate, in view of 11...♖d7 12 ♖g5 which is Line B21) 12 dxe5 ♖d7!? (Black can also play 12...♜xd1 13 ♜xd1 ♖d7 transposing to Line B1) 13 e6 fxe6 14 ♜e2 (worse is 14

♭g5?! ♭d4 15 ♖e3 ♭b6) 14...b4 and:

c1) 15 ♭b5 ♜xf3!? 16 ♜xf3 ♝ce5 17 a4 (17 ♖g2? ♖a6) 17...♭xf3+ 18 ♜xf3 ♖b7 19 ♜e2 ♭e5 20 f4 ♜d3! 21 ♡f2 ♜f5 22 g4 ♭d3+ 23 ♡g3 ♜e4 24 ♜xe4 ♖xe4 25 ♭xc7 ♡f7 gave Black good compensation for the exchange in W.Bunk-F.Tarrio Ocana, correspondence 2008; White has trouble developing and Black even went on to win.

c2) 15 ♭e4 ♭de5 16 ♭xe5 ♭xe5 17 ♜d1 (Black looks okay after 17 ♭c5 ♜d4 18 ♖e3 ♜c4) 17...♖a6! 18 ♜c2 b3! 19 ♜xb3 (or 19 axb3 ♖d3) 19...♜xb3 20 ♜xd8 ♭f3+ 21 ♖xf3 ♜bxf3 22 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 23 a4 ♜d8 24 ♖e3 ♖xb2 25 ♜b1 ♖e5 26 a5 was agreed drawn in M.Jones-H.Grabner, correspondence 2007.



11...e6!

This is a typical, flexible move in the Panno. Instead 11...e5 12 dxe5 (12 d5 b4 is less clear) 12...♭xe5 13 ♭xe5 dxe5 14 ♖e3 looks favourable for White because of the weaknesses on the c-file, while 11...♭d7 12 ♖g5 (or 12 ♖e3) 12...h6 13 ♖e3 has scored poorly for Black.

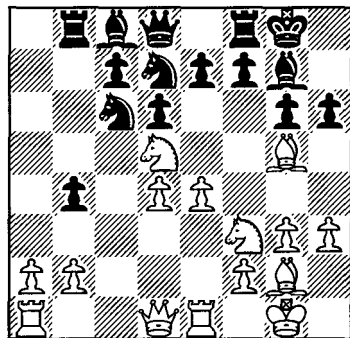
Black's most common alternative is 11...b4. After 12 ♭d5 he has:

a) 12...♖d7 13 ♭xf6+ exf6 (even worse is 13...♖xf6 14 ♖h6 ♖g7 - or 14...♜e8 15 e5! - 15 ♖xg7 ♡xg7 16 ♜c1) 14 ♖f4 ♜e8 15 ♜c1 when White is better, as given by Avrukh.

b) 12...♭a5 13 ♭xf6+ ♖xf6 14 ♖h6 ♜e8 15 ♜c1 similarly gave White a pleasant advantage in M.Amanov-E.Yanayt, Las Vegas 2010.

c) 12...♭xd5 13 exd5 ♭a5 14 ♖g5 ♜e8 15 ♜c1 ♜b5 16 ♭h2!? b3 17 ♖d2! bxa2 was K.Urban-T.Petrosian, Warsaw 2005. Now the obvious 18 b4! ♭b7 19 ♜a4 looks good for White, as Black's knight will remain out of play.

d) 12...♭d7 13 ♖g5 h6 and now:



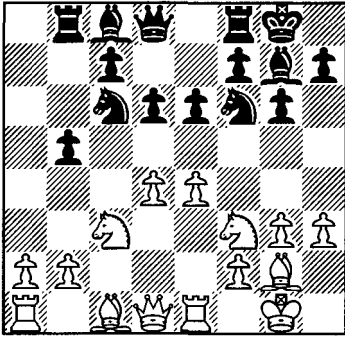
d1) 14 ♖e3 is played the most often, but 14...e6 15 ♭f4 e5 16 ♭d5 exd4 17 ♭xd4 ♭xd4 18 ♖xd4 ♭e5 (or 18...c5 19 ♖xg7 ♡xg7 20 ♜c2 ♭e5 21 ♜ad1 ♭c6 with even chances in K.Spraggett-K.Berbatov, Seville 2009) 19 f4 c5! 20 ♖f2 ♭c6?! 21 e5! dxe5 22 ♖xc5 gave White the initiative in S.Lputian-M.Erdogdu, Heraklion 2007. However,

20...♗d7! improves and gives Black a decent position.

d2) 14 ♜c1 looks too fancy after 14...hxg5 15 ♜xc6 e6 16 ♗xc7 ♜b6 17 ♜c2 ♗b7 with the idea of ...♜c6.

d3) 14 ♜c1 is the problem. This has not been seen in practice, but it is quickly found by the computer and was recommended by Avrukh. Black has problems after both 14...♗b7 15 ♜xc6 hxg5 16 ♗xb4 and 14...hxg5 15 ♜xc6.

Now we return to 11...e6:



12 ♜c2

Other moves have failed to trouble Black in the slightest:

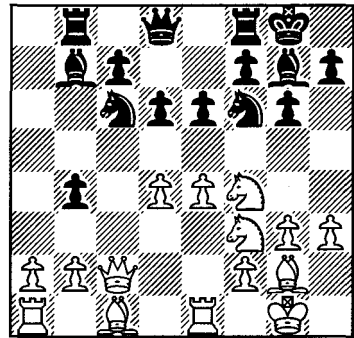
a) 12 ♗e3?! b4 13 ♗a4 and now 13...♗b7 was fine for Black in L.Portisch-A.Adorjan, Budapest 1975, but 13...♗xe4 is more critical. After 14 ♜c2 ♗b7 15 ♜xe4 ♗xd4 16 ♜xb7 ♜xb7 Adorjan considered 17 ♗xd4 to be winning for White, but after 17...c5! Black is better. The point is that after something like 18 ♗xe6 fxe6 19 ♗xb7 Black has 19...♜d7! attacking two loose minor pieces.

b) 12 e5 dxe5 13 ♗xe5 was J.Nogueiras-H.Pecorelli Garcia, Santa

Clara 2001. Here 13...♗xd4! 14 ♗e3 c5 15 ♗xd4 cxd4 16 ♗c6 ♜b6 17 ♗e2 (worse is 17 ♗xb8 dxc3 18 ♗c6 cxb2 19 ♜b1 ♗b7 when Black has more than enough for the exchange) 17...♜b7 18 ♜xd4 ♗d5 19 ♜xb6 ♜xb6 is fairly level.

c) 12 d5 b4! (instead 12...♗e7 13 dxe6 ♗xe6 is fine for Black, but 13 a3!? is a little annoying) 13 dxc6 bxc3 14 bxc3 e5 and Black's better pawn structure gives him good chances: for example, 15 ♜a4 (Black was also doing well after 15 c4 ♜b6 16 c5 ♜xc6 17 cxd6 cxd6 18 ♗g5 ♗a6 in K.Urban-V.Ivanchuk, Warsaw (rapid) 2009) 15...♜b6 16 ♗e3 ♜a6 17 ♜b4 ♜xc6 18 ♗d2 ♗e6 19 c4 ♜a6 20 c5 ♜a8 and Black stood well in P.Tregubov-F.Nijboer, Istanbul 2003.

12...b4 13 ♗e2 ♗b7 14 ♗f4



White has more space, but Black has good development and dynamic potential. Black has several options, but the best course is to maintain the tension.

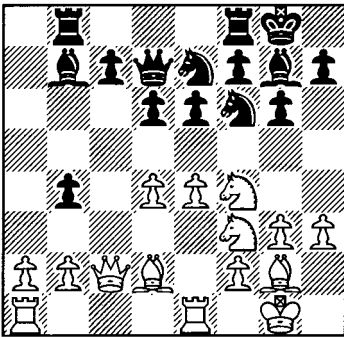
14...♗a5!?

A rare but interesting move which was not considered by Avrukh. However, preparing ...c5 is a normal idea. There

are several alternatives:

a) 14...e5?! 15 dxe5 dxe5 16 ♖d3 ♜e8 17 ♗c5 gave White an obvious advantage in Z.Blazsik-D.Camper, correspondence 1997. Black has to be careful about weakening the c5-square like this.

b) 14...♗e7!? has been played a few times. After 15 ♖d2 ♜d7 the position is unclear.

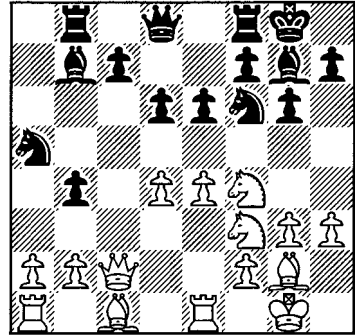


c) 14...♗d7 is similar in spirit after 15 d5 (also possible is the less forcing 15 ♖e3) 15...exd5 16 ♗xd5 and now:

c1) 16...♗c5!? 17 ♖g5 ♗d4 18 ♜d2 ♗xf3+ 19 ♖xf3 ♜d7 20 ♗f6+ (or 20 ♖g4 ♜b5 21 ♗f6+ ♗h8 with the idea of ...h6) 20...♖xf6 21 ♖xf6 ♜xh3 looks risky, but Black has counterplay.

c2) 16...♜e8 17 ♖g5 ♜c8 18 ♜ac1 h6!? (instead 18...♜a8 19 b3 ♜a5 20 ♜d2 ♗c5 21 ♗h2 ♗e5 22 ♗f6+ ♖xf6 23 ♖xf6 ♗ed3 24 ♜h6 ♗e6 was J.Horton-A.Vorobiev, correspondence 2006, and here Avrukh suggests 25 ♗g4! ♜h5 26 ♜d2 ♗xe1 27 ♜xe1 with excellent attacking chances for White) 19 ♖d2 ♜a8 20 ♗xb4 (after 20 b3 ♜a5 21 ♗xb4 ♜c5 the e4-pawn will fall) 20...♗xb4 21 ♖xb4

c5 22 ♖a3 (this puts the bishop out of play, but 22 ♖c3 ♜xa2 looks okay for Black) 22...♗e5 gives Black active play.



15 ♖d2

Instead 15 e5 dxe5 (or 15...♗d5!?) 16 dxe5 ♗d7 17 ♗d3 can still be met by 17...c5!. After 18 ♖g5 (or 18 ♗xc5 ♜c7 19 ♖e3 ♗xe5) 18...♜b6 19 b3 ♜fc8 Black was doing well and went on to win in M.Petrillo-H.Grabner, correspondence 2004.

15...c5

Black is able to play this move because of his pressure on the e4-pawn.

16 dxc5 dxc5 17 ♜ad1

After 17 ♜xc5? ♗xe4 18 ♜xb4 ♗xd2 19 ♜xd2 ♖xf3 20 ♜xd8 ♜fxd8 21 ♖xf3 ♜xb2 Black regains the pawn and has a strong initiative.

17...♜b6

17...♜e7!? is also possible.

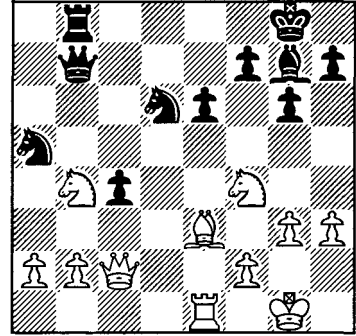
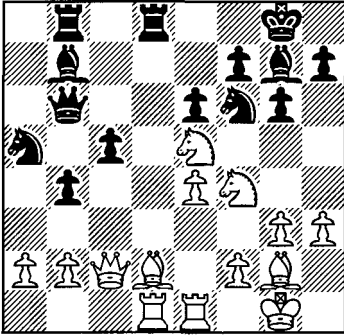
18 ♗e5 ♜fd8

Black has also tried 18...♜bc8. After 19 ♗fd3 ♜b5! 20 a4 bxa3 21 bxa3 c4 22 ♜b1 ♜a6 23 ♗b2 c3 24 ♖xc3 ♗d7 25 ♖f1 ♜a8 26 ♗ec4 ♖xc3 27 ♜xc3 ♗xc4 28 ♗xc4 ♖xe4 the position was equal

and eventually drawn in N.Bensiek-T.Zwicker, correspondence 2007.

$\text{e}xb2$ with an extra pawn.

23 $\text{d}xb4$ $\text{d}d6$ 24 $\text{e}xb7$ $\text{w}xb7$



19 $\text{e}e3?$!

After this Black seizes the initiative. Better was 19 $\text{d}fd3$ $\text{b}bc8$ 20 $\text{w}a4$ $\text{e}c6!$? 21 $\text{d}xc6$ $\text{d}xc6$ when Black's active pieces and control of d4 compensate for White's bishop-pair.

Black was clearly better in S.Swapnil-M.Hebden, Hastings 2010/11, as his king is the safer and he controls the light squares.

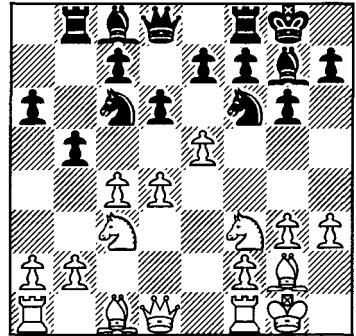
19... $\text{e}xd1$ 20 $\text{w}xd1$

If 20 $\text{e}xd1$ b3! 21 axb3 $\text{w}xb3$ and Black has the initiative after 22 $\text{w}xb3$ (or 22 $\text{w}b1$ $\text{e}xe4!$) 22... $\text{d}xb3$.

B) 10 e5

20... $\text{w}c7!$

Not 20... $\text{d}xe4?$ 21 $\text{d}d7$.



21 $\text{d}ed3$ $\text{d}xe4$ 22 $\text{w}c2$

White attacks not only the c5-pawn, but also the b4-pawn due to the pin on the c-file. However, even though White is able to win back the pawn Black manages to keep the upper hand in the complications.

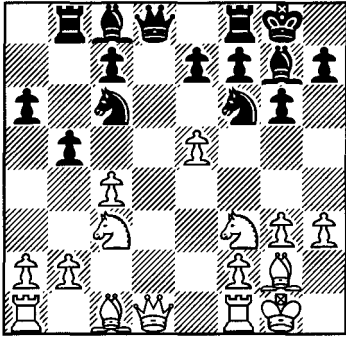
White pushes forward. Now Black can go into an endgame or play for complications.

22...c4

If 22... $\text{e}f8$ 23 $\text{d}xb4$, but 22... $\text{w}c8!$? was tempting: 23 $\text{d}xc5$ (23 $\text{e}xe4$ would win back the pawn, but hand Black a powerful bishop-pair) 23... $\text{d}xc5$ 24 $\text{w}xc5$ $\text{w}xc5$ 25 $\text{e}xc5$ $\text{e}xg2$ 26 $\text{e}xg2$

B1: 10... $\text{d}xe5$
B2: 10... $\text{d}d7$

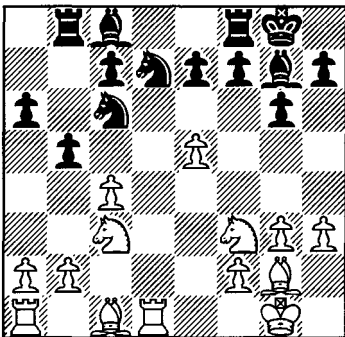
B1) 10... $\text{d}xe5$ 11 $\text{d}xe5$



11... ♖xd1

Trading queens is probably best. Black's position is quite sound, but there are certain drawish tendencies in the endgame. Instead the rare 11... ♖d7!? has generally been condemned, but it is not so clear. After 12 e6 fxe6 13 ♖e2 (alternatively, 13 ♖g5 ♖d4 14 ♖e3 ♖b6 15 cxb5 axb5 is comfortable for Black, while 13 cxb5 axb5 14 ♖e2 b4 is variation 'c' in the notes to White's 11th move in Line A), 13...b4!? could be tried.

12 ♖xd1 ♖d7



13 e6

It appears that the e5-pawn is just lost, so White at least destroys Black's

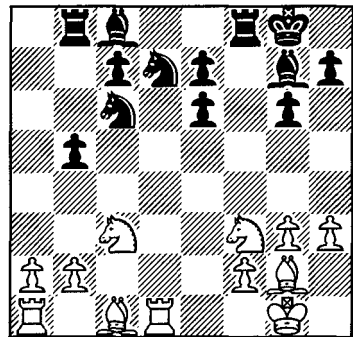
pawn structure. However, he can also consider 13 cxb5 axb5 14 ♖e3!? (14 e6 fxe6 transposes back to the main line) and now:

a) 14... ♖dx5?! loses material after 15 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 16 ♖a7.

b) 14...b4 15 ♖d5 e6 (after 15... ♖dx5?! 16 ♖ac1 ♖xf3+ 17 ♖xf3 e6 18 ♖xc7 ♖e5 19 ♖g2 when White's threats of ♖a7 and f4 gave him a winning position in Bu Xiangzhi-N.Samakov, Guangzhou 2010) 16 ♖xc7 ♖cxe5 17 ♖d4! (after 17 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 18 ♖ac1 b3 19 axb3 ♖xb3 20 ♖h6 ♖g7 21 ♖f4 ♖e5 Black was fine in J.Bernasek-M.Kozak, Zdar nad Sazavou 2007) 17... ♖b7 18 ♖ac1 ♖b6 19 b3 was Wu Shaobin-Lu Yijie, Beijing 2010. White's more active pieces give him a clear advantage.

c) 14... ♖b6! 15 ♖d4 ♖xe5 16 ♖f4 b4 17 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 18 ♖c6 bxc3 19 bxc3 was D.Bocharov-L.Aronian, Moscow 2004. Here Black could play 19... ♖xc3! 20 ♖ac1 (if 20 ♖xb8 ♖xa1 21 ♖xa1 ♖xh3!) 20... ♖b2 21 ♖b1 ♖f6 22 ♖xb8 ♖f5 when he is doing well.

13...fxe6 14 cxb5 axb5



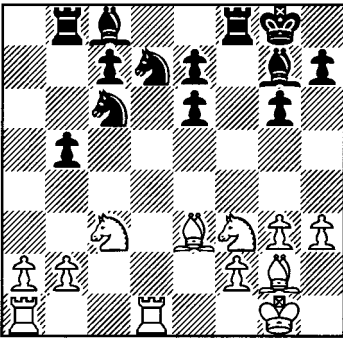
In return for the sacrificed pawn, White has the easier development and has damaged Black's pawn structure. White has enough for the pawn, but Black should not experience any significant problems. Now White has a choice:

B11: 15 ♖e3

B12: 15 ♖f4

Instead 15 ♖g5 is not very dangerous. After 15...♗d4 16 ♖e3 c5 17 ♖ce4 e5 18 ♖xd4 Black can play 18...cxd4, which allows an immediate draw with 19 ♖e6 ♜e8 20 ♖c7 ♜d8 21 ♖e6, or 18...exd4 19 ♖e6 ♜f5 20 ♜ac1 ♖b7 21 ♖4xc5 ♖xc5 22 ♖xc5 ♖xg2 23 ♖xg2 ♜c8 24 ♖d3 ♜c4 with equality in Z.Nemeth-Z.Ballai, Hungarian League 2000.

B11) 15 ♖e3



15...♗b6

The alternative 15...b4 16 ♖a4 ♖ce5 (16...♖de5 17 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 18 ♜ac1 is good for White) has scored well for Black, but I am not so sure it is good: 17 ♖d4 (instead 17 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 18 ♖c6

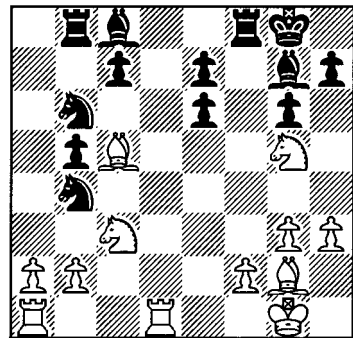
♖d6 19 ♖a7 ♜b7 20 ♖xb7 ♖xb7 gave Black good compensation for the exchange in U.Herrmann-A.Schartner, correspondence 1996) 17...♗b6 18 ♖xb6 ♜xb6 19 ♜ac1 ♜d6 20 ♜xc7 ♖a6 21 ♜xe7 ♜fd8 22 ♜d2 ♖f6 was P.Nikolic-A.Zapata, Tunis Interzonal 1985. Now 23 ♜xe6! with the idea of 23...♗c4 24 ♖c6! would have been very strong.

16 ♖g5 ♗b4

Black has also tried 16...♖e5. After 17 ♖c5 (White should probably just play 17 ♖d4 h6 18 ♖ge4 with compensation for the pawn) 17...h6 18 ♖ge4 b4! 19 ♖xb4 ♖d5 20 ♖c5 ♜xb2 21 ♜ab1 ♜xb1 22 ♜xb1, as in P.5zilagyi-A.Peter, Hungarian League 1995, 22...♖d7! would be awkward for White.

17 ♖c5

More solid is 17 ♜ac1 h6 18 ♖ge4 c6 19 ♖d4 ♖xd4 20 ♜xd4 ♖4d5 21 ♖c5 with compensation.



17...♖a6

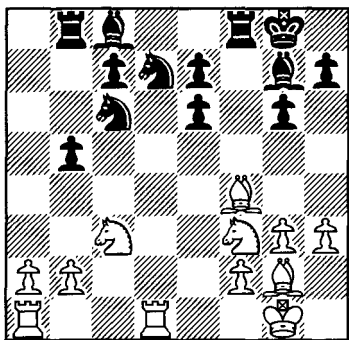
17...♖4d5!? looks good.

18 ♖d4 b4

Now 19 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 20 ♖ce4 would be approximately equal. Instead 19 ♖e2

allowed Black to take over after 19...e5 20 ♖e3 h6 21 ♗e4 ♖e6 22 b3 ♗d5 in Z.Mamedjarova-Y.Dembo, Leon 2001.

B12) 15 ♖f4



This is more common.

15...b4

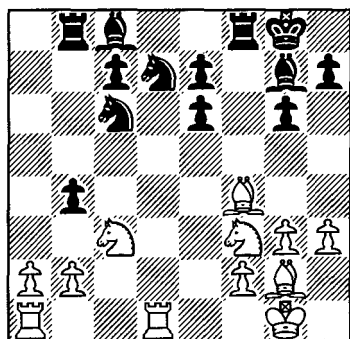
This forcing move scores the best. Instead 15...e5 16 ♖e3 just takes away the e5-square from Black's pieces. However, 15...♗d5 16 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 17 ♖ac1 c5 is a solid alternative. Then:

a) 18 a4 is harmless: 18...bxa4 19 ♗xa4 c4 20 ♖c2 (20 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 21 ♖xc4 ♖xb2 is also level, as 22 ♖b1 can be met by 22...♖e5) was R.Vaganian-V.Kupreichik, USSR Championship, Vilnius 1980. Now the simplest is 20...♖b4 21 ♗c5 ♗d3 when the coming exchanges will leave Black with a useless extra pawn and a likely draw.

b) 18 ♖e3 ♗c4! 19 ♖xc5 ♗xb2 20 ♖d2 ♖xc3! (initiating mass liquidation) 21 ♖xc3 ♗a4 22 ♖c1 ♗xc5 23 ♖xc5 ♖b7 24 ♖xb5 ♖xg2 25 ♖xb8 ♖xb8 26 ♖xg2 ♖a8 led to a draw in P.Nikolic-P.Acs, Tripoli 2004.

c) 18 ♖c2 c4 19 ♖e2 ♖xf4! 20 gxf4 ♗d3 21 ♖e4 b4 22 ♗a4 was played in K.Arkill-R.Byrne, London 1991. Here 22...♖d7! 23 b3 ♖xa4 (but not 23...♗xf4 24 ♖ed2 ♖xa4 25 ♖d8+ ♖xd8 26 ♖xd8+ ♖f7 27 bxa4 ♗e2+ 28 ♖g2 ♗c3 29 ♖c6 when White's a-pawn is too dangerous) 24 bxa4 ♗xf4 25 ♖e3 c3 gives Black enough compensation for the exchange.

d) 18 ♗e4 c4 19 ♗c5 ♖b6 20 b3 cxb3 (simpler than 20...♖d6, although this looks okay too after 21 ♖e1 ♖f5 22 bxc4 bxc4 23 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 24 ♖xc4 ♖d4 25 ♗e4 ♖d8) 21 axb3 ♖d6 22 ♖e1 ♗d3 23 ♖xd6 ♗xe1 24 ♖xe7 ♖e8 25 ♗e4 ♗xg2 26 ♗d6 ♗f4! (this time Black ruins the white pawn structure) 27 gxf4 ♖xe7 28 ♖xc8+ ♖f8 29 ♗xb5 ♖b7 30 ♗d4 ♖f7 31 ♗f3 (or 31 ♖c6 ♖e7 32 ♖g2 ♖f6 33 ♗xe6 ♖xb3 1/2-1/2 M.Schulze-V.Chetvertakoff, correspondence 2008) 31...♖h6 1/2-1/2 A.Goldin-E.Gleizerov, USSR 1986.

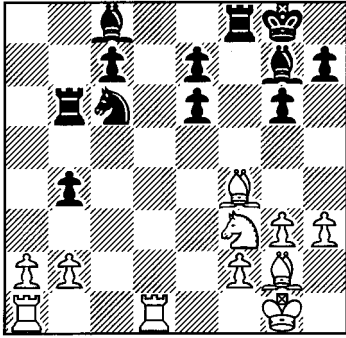


16 ♗a4 ♗b6 17 ♗xb6

Instead 17 ♗c5?! is natural but not very good: 17...♗d5 18 ♗g5?! (White could not bring herself to play 18 ♖c1)

18...♗xf4 19 ♔xc6 ♖e2+ 20 ♜f1 ♗d4 gave Black good chances in D.Harika-T.Abrahamyan, Yerevan 2006.

17...♞xb6



18 ♔xc7

White has a reasonable alternative in 18 ♞ac1. After 18...♔xb2 19 ♔xc7 ♞a6 20 ♞c4 (worse is 20 ♞c5?! ♞f5 21 ♞c4 ♞d5! when Black had the initiative and an extra pawn in U.Adianto-T.Shaked, New York 1994), Black has a broad choice:

a) 20...♞xa2?! 21 ♞xc6 ♔b7 22 ♗g5! ♔xc6 23 ♔xc6 ♞a1 24 ♞xa1 ♔xa1 25 ♗xe6 ♞f6 26 ♔d5 ♜f7 27 g4 was winning for White in R.Vaganian-F.Nijboer, Antwerp 1997. If 27...♞xe6 28 g5! and Black will run out of moves.

b) 20...e5 21 ♗g5 (21 ♗e1!? is another idea) 21...♗d4 22 ♞xb4 (and here White could consider 22 ♔f1!?) 22...♗e2+ 23 ♜h1 ♔d4 24 ♞b8 ♗c3 25 ♞d2 h6 26 ♗f3 ♗e4 27 ♗xd4 ♗xd2 28 ♔xe5 and White had good compensation for the exchange in P.Van der Sterren-F.Nijboer, Wijk aan Zee 1998.

c) 20...♔f6 21 h4 (21 ♗e1!?) 21...e5 22

♗g5 ♗d4 23 ♞xb4 ♜g7 looks okay for Black. After 24 ♔d5?! ♗e2+ 25 ♜g2 ♗c3 26 ♞d3 ♗xd5 27 ♞xd5 ♞xa2 Black had all the chances in M.Bosboom-F.Nijboer, Rotterdam 2000.

d) 20...♔c3 looks like a good move. Black secures both his bishop and the b4-pawn. Following 21 ♗g5 h6 (Black could even consider 21...♗a7!?) 22 ♞xc6?! (after 22 ♗e4 ♗a5 23 ♞c5 ♗b7 24 ♞c4 Black can play on with 24...♗d6!?, but White could consider 22 ♔xc6 hxg5 23 a4!?) 22...hxg5 23 ♔d8 ♞xc6 24 ♔xc6 ♜f7 25 ♔a5 ♔a6 26 a3 ♔e2 27 ♞d7, 27...bxa3 28 ♔xc3 ♞c8 secured a draw in D.Ippolito-M.Lee, Philadelphia 2008, but Black could have played for more with 27...♞c8! 28 ♔b7 bxa3 29 ♔xc8 ♔xa5 when the a-pawn is very dangerous.

18...♞a6

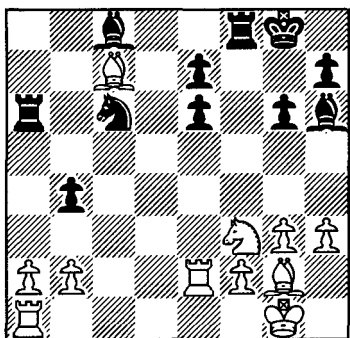
This is more active than 18...♞b7, although this should be playable as well: 19 ♔f4 ♔xb2 20 ♞ab1 ♔c3 21 ♗g5 ♞b6 22 ♗e4 (22 ♔e3 ♞a6 23 ♗e4 e5 24 ♗xc3 bxc3 25 ♞bc1 ♗d4 26 ♔xd4 exd4 27 ♞xd4 ♔e6 was equal in E.Geller-G.Sax, Skara 1980) 22...♔d4 23 ♞bc1 e5 24 ♔h6 ♞d8 25 ♗c5 ♞d6 26 ♗e4 ♞d8 was unclear in A.Goldin-H.Gruenberg, Moscow 1989.

19 ♞d2 ♔h6

Black forces the play. Also possible is 19...♗a5 20 ♞c2 (White could try 20 ♞c1!? ♔h6 21 ♔f4 ♔xf4 22 gxf4 when both sides have ugly pawns, but White is the more active) 20...♗b3 (or 20...♔b7 21 ♗g5 ♔xg2 22 ♜xg2 ♗b3) 21 ♞e1

♖xa2 22 ♗e5 ♗f6 with a draw in R.Kempinski-B.Socko, German League 2005.

20 ♖e2



20...♖xf3 21 ♗xf3 ♜d4 22 ♗g4 ♜xe2+ 23 ♗xe2 ♞c6 24 ♗e5 ♗g7 25 ♗xg7 ♜xg7

The endgame is completely equal. After 26 a4 ♞c2 27 ♗f1 ♞xb2 28 a5 b3 29 ♗c4 ♗f6 30 h4 ♗e5 31 a6 ♞a2 32 ♞xa2 bxa2 33 ♗xa2 ♗xa6 the game was drawn in G.Gajewski-F.Nijboer, Warsaw 2005.

B2) 10...♞d7

Instead of going into an endgame, Black is ready for complications. White has two main tries for an advantage:

B21: 11 cxb5

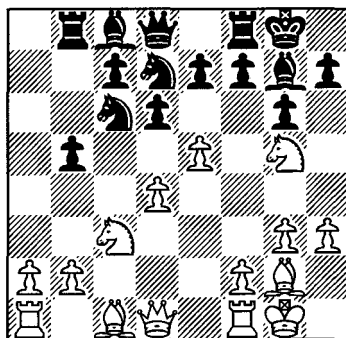
B22: 11 e6

Instead 11 ♞g5? wins a piece, but it is poorly timed. Black will be able to capture on c4 at some point, giving him another pawn for the piece compared with Line B21: for example, 11...dxe5 12

♗xc6 exd4 13 ♞e2 ♞e5 (13...bxc4!? 14 ♞xd4 ♞c5 is also possible) 14 ♞xd4 (even worse are 14 ♗g2 ♞xc4 and 14 cxb5 h6 15 ♞f3 ♞xc6 16 bxc6 ♗xh3 17 ♞e1 e5) 14...♞xc4 and the attack on the d4-knight will give Black time to play ...h6 and ...♗xh3, with three good pawns for the piece.

B21) 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♞g5

Instead 12 e6 is not dangerous after 12...fxe6 13 d5 ♞b4 14 ♞g5 ♞c5 15 dxe6 ♗b7!? (Boel mentions some alternatives such as 15...♞bd3 16 ♞f7 ♞e8 17 ♞h6+ ♗h8 18 ♞f7+ ♞xf7! or 15...♞f5!? 16 g4 ♞xg5 17 ♗xg5 ♗xe6) 16 ♗xb7 ♞xb7 17 ♗e3 ♞bd3 and Black had the initiative in D.Barlov-J.Piket, Wijk aan Zee 1985.



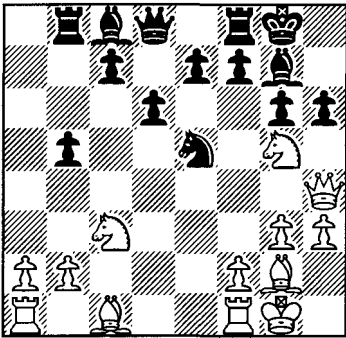
Now Black is committed to a piece sacrifice which he can make in various ways.

12...dxe5

Instead 12...♞dx5 is almost certainly wrong, as after 13 dxe5 ♞xe5 14 ♞f3 ♞xf3+ 15 ♞xf3 b4 16 ♞e4 d5? (16...c5 is better but still looks insuffi-

cient) 17 $\text{d}c5$ White was much better in Xu Jun-M.A.I Modiahki, Kolkata 2001. Black does have a couple of interesting alternatives, however:

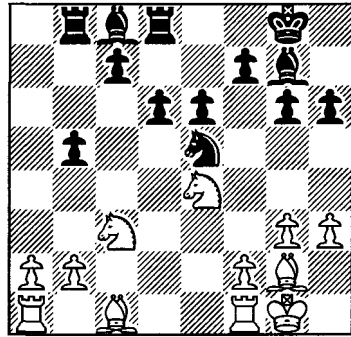
a) 12... $\text{d}xd4$ leads to an ending where Black has two pawns for a piece. This line has been contested in several battles between the English Grandmasters Arkell and Hebden, but I think Black is really just trying to hold on here. After 13 $\text{w}xd4$ $\text{d}xe5$ 14 $\text{w}h4$ h6 White has:



a1) 15 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{d}xf3+$ 16 $\text{e}xf3$ e6 (instead 16...g5 17 $\text{w}h5$ b4 18 $\text{d}e4$ looks better for White, but after 18... $\text{e}f5$ 19 $\text{e}g2$ d5 20 $\text{d}d1$ e6 the position was unclear in K.Thorsteins-J.Van der Wiel, Reykjavik 1985) 17 $\text{w}xd8$ $\text{b}xd8$ 18 a4! bxa4 19 $\text{b}xa4$ c5 (worse is 19...d5 20 $\text{b}a5$! when Black's pawns were blockaded in K.Arkell-M.Hebden, London 1999) 20 $\text{d}d1$ d5 21 h4 $\text{e}d7$ 22 $\text{b}a5$ $\text{d}dc8$ is unclear. After 23 $\text{d}xd5$ exd5 24 $\text{e}xd5$ (K.Arkell-M.Hebden, British League 1998), Black's best is 24... $\text{e}d4$ with the idea of 25 $\text{b}a7$ $\text{d}d8$ 26 $\text{e}hx6$ $\text{e}e8$ 27 $\text{e}f3$ $\text{b}xb2$ with equality.

a2) 15 $\text{d}ge4$ e6 (15...g5 16 $\text{e}xg5$

gives White good attacking chances) 16 $\text{w}xd8$ $\text{b}xd8$ and now:

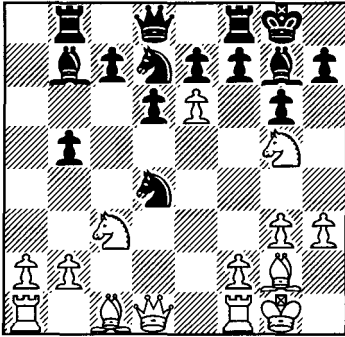


a21) 17 $\text{d}d1$ b4 (or 17...f5 18 $\text{d}c5$ $\text{d}f7$ 19 $\text{d}b3$ b4 20 $\text{d}e2$ c5 with unclear play in K.Arkell-G.Lane, London 1988) 18 $\text{d}e2$ $\text{e}b7$ 19 f4 (White should prefer 19 $\text{d}f4$, as in R.Lovkov-E.Gorovykh, St Petersburg 2007, which should be somewhat better for White, although the position is not totally clear) 19... $\text{d}c4$ 20 $\text{b}b1$ $\text{b}a8$ 21 a3 bxa3?! 22 bxa3 $\text{e}xe4$ 23 $\text{e}xe4$ d5 24 $\text{e}d3$ $\text{d}xa3$ 25 $\text{b}b3$ $\text{e}f8$ was K.Arkell-M.Hebden, Plymouth 1989. Now 26 $\text{d}c3$! $\text{e}d6$ 27 $\text{e}e3$ would retain an edge, but Black could improve with 21... $\text{e}xe4$! 22 $\text{e}xe4$ d5 23 $\text{e}d3$ $\text{d}xa3$! 24 bxa3 bxa3 25 $\text{e}xa3$ $\text{b}xa3$.

a22) 17 a4 bxa4 18 $\text{d}d1$ $\text{d}c4$ 19 $\text{d}xa4$ $\text{e}d7$ 20 $\text{d}ec3$ was K.Arkell-M.Hebden, Port Erin 1996. Here Black should settle for 20... $\text{e}xa4$ 21 $\text{d}xa4$ $\text{d}xb2$ 22 $\text{d}xb2$ $\text{e}xb2$ 23 $\text{e}xb2$ $\text{b}xb2$ 24 $\text{b}ac1$, although White retains some advantage as Black's pawns are not easy to mobilize.

b) 12... $\text{e}b7$ was very enthusiastically endorsed by Gufeld. This is a very crea-

tive try and matters are indeed not so clear, but it looks to me like the onus is on Black after 13 e6! (Black was at least okay after 13 f4 b4 14 ♖e2 ♖b6 15 ♗e3 e6 16 ♗f2 ♖e7 17 ♗b3 ♗xg2 18 ♖xg2 ♖ed5 in P.Nikolic-F.Nijboer, Leiden 2007) 13...♖xd4 and here:



b1) 14 exd7 ♗xd7 (14...♗xg2 15 ♖xg2 ♗xd7 also leaves Black with some compensation) 15 ♗e3 c5 16 ♗xd4?! cxd4 17 ♖e2 e5 and Black's big centre gave him enough for the piece in J.Richardson-M.Hebden, British League 2006.

b2) 14 ♗xb7 ♗xb7 15 ♖xf7 (instead 15 exd7 ♗xd7 16 a4 bxa4 17 ♗xa4 c5 18 ♖f3 e5 gave Black good play in K.Arkell-E.Gufeld, Hastings 1994/95, but 15 exf7!? is possible) 15...♗a8 (15...♗xf7?! was insufficient after 16 exf7+ ♖h8 17 ♖e4 c5 18 ♗e3 ♖f8 19 a4! in S.Maze-M.Hebden, Kilkenny 2010) 16 ♖h6+ ♗xh6 17 ♗xh6 ♖f3+ 18 ♖g2 ♗bb8! 19 ♗d5 c6 20 ♗d1 ♖de5 21 ♗xf8 ♗xf8 was good for Black in M.Vujadinovich-A.Vujanovich, correspondence 1999.

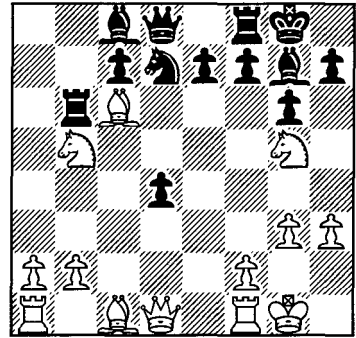
b3) 14 ♖xf7!? ♗xf7 (14...♗e8!? 15

♖h6+ ♖h8 16 exd7 ♗xd7 gives Black some play, even with only one pawn for the piece) 15 exf7+ ♖f8 16 ♗xb7 ♗xb7 and now both 17 ♗e3, as in W.Brodda-S.Matyukhin, correspondence 2008, and 17 ♖e4!? look favourable for White.

13 ♗xc6 exd4 14 ♖xb5

After 14 ♖e2 h6 15 ♖f3 e5 Black has two pawns and a big centre for the piece.

14...♗b6

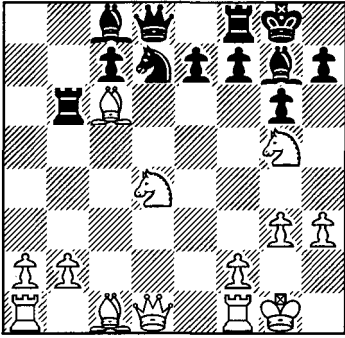


Black has only one pawn for the piece, but it is not easy for White to extricate his minor pieces.

15 ♖a7

The white knight heads into the black camp. Instead 15 ♗f3? ♖e5 wins for Black, while 15 ♗c2? ♖e5 16 ♖a7 ♖xc6 17 ♖xc6 ♗d7 gives Black the initiative after 18 ♖a7 ♗b7 or 18 ♖a5 d3. White can easily save material with 15 ♗xd7?!, but Black has good play after 15...♗xd7 16 a4 c6 17 ♖a3 h6 18 ♖f3 ♗d5! (worse is 18...♗xh3?! 19 ♖c4 ♗b4 20 ♖ce5) 19 ♖h2 d3.

White's main alternative is 15 ♖xd4 when Black has:



a) 15... $\text{d}b8$ is the main line, but White can keep a small edge with 16 $\text{d}de6!$ (worse is 16 $\text{e}e4?! \text{e}xd4$ 17 $\text{c}c2 \text{d}a6$ 18 $\text{d}d1 \text{d}d6$ 19 $\text{e}e2$ c5 20 $\text{g}g2 \text{f}f5$ 21 $\text{d}d4 \text{d}d7!$, as in P.Szekely-N.Weinstein, Budapest 1976, because 22 g4 $\text{e}xe4$ 23 $\text{e}xe4 \text{d}d8$ intending ... $\text{e}xf2$ is very good for Black) 16... $\text{c}cxd1$ (White also keeps an edge after both 16... $\text{f}fxe6$ 17 $\text{c}cxd8 \text{e}xd8$ 18 $\text{e}e4$ and 16... $\text{e}exe6$ 17 $\text{d}dx6 \text{f}fx6$ 18 $\text{e}e4 \text{e}xb2$ 19 $\text{b}b1 \text{e}xc1$ 20 $\text{e}xc1$) 17 $\text{e}xd1 \text{e}xe6$ 18 $\text{d}dx6 \text{f}fx6$ 19 $\text{e}e4 \text{e}xb2$ 20 $\text{b}b1 \text{e}xc1$ 21 $\text{b}bxc1$ and White still had a little something to work with in K.Arkell-S.Buckley, Monmouth 2001.

b) 15... $\text{e}xd4!$? is supposed to be bad after 16 $\text{c}cxd4 \text{e}xc6$ 17 $\text{h}h4$, but with both sides missing 'their' bishop, this looks worth a try. After 17... $\text{d}d6$ White has nothing clear-cut: for example, 18 $\text{h}h6 \text{d}d5$, 18 b3 $\text{e}c2$ or 18 $\text{e}e3 \text{e}b7$.

15... $\text{d}b8$

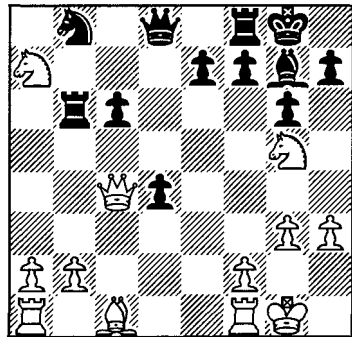
Other moves are also possible:

a) 15...h6?! 16 $\text{d}df3 \text{e}a6$ 17 $\text{e}e1 \text{d}db8$ 18 $\text{e}e4?! \text{d}d7!$ was unclear in P.Nikolic-J.Nunn, Wijk aan Zee 1982, but 18 $\text{c}ca4!$

would have been more testing.

b) 15... $\text{e}a6$ 16 $\text{e}e1 \text{d}db8$ 17 $\text{c}ca4! \text{e}e5$ 18 $\text{g}g2 \text{c}c5$ 19 b3! (White intends to play $\text{d}dc6$, which would fail to 19... $\text{d}d7$ if White played it immediately; therefore he first protects his queen) 19...h6 (the immediate 19... $\text{c}c7$ may be better, but Black still fails to equalize: for example, 20 $\text{e}ea3 \text{d}d7$ 21 $\text{e}ec6! \text{e}d3$ 22 $\text{e}exd7 \text{a}a6$ 23 $\text{d}db5 \text{b}b7$ 24 $\text{d}dd6! \text{e}xd6$ 25 $\text{e}exc5 \text{a}a6$ 26 $\text{b}bb4 \text{c}cxd7$ 27 $\text{e}exf8 \text{e}xf8$ 28 $\text{d}dd2 \text{b}bb5$ 29 $\text{e}xe5! \text{c}cxe5$ 30 $\text{c}cxd3$) 20 $\text{d}de4 \text{c}c7$ 21 $\text{e}ea3 \text{d}d7$ 22 $\text{e}eac1 \text{c}cxa7$ 23 $\text{d}dx5$ with a clear advantage for White in P.Nikolic-H.Kotz, Rethymnon 2003.

c) 15... $\text{a}a6!$? looks playable: 16 $\text{d}dxc8 \text{e}xc6$ 17 $\text{d}da7$ (Black was already better after 17 $\text{c}ca4 \text{d}db8$ 18 $\text{d}dxe7+ \text{c}cxe7$ in D.Haessel-I.Zenyuk, Berkeley 2008) 17... $\text{b}b6$ 18 $\text{c}ca4$ (18 a4 $\text{c}ca8!$ catches the knight) 18... $\text{d}db8$ 19 $\text{c}cc4$ (worse is 19 $\text{d}db5? \text{d}d7$) 19...c6.



Now:

c1) After 20 $\text{e}ef4?! \text{e}e5$ 21 $\text{e}ed2 \text{a}a6!$ the knight is trapped. Now White tries to complicate things, but he only makes matters worse: 22 $\text{e}eb4?!$ (instead 22

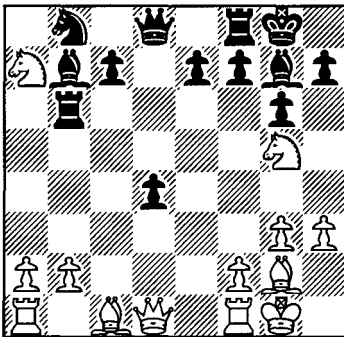
♖xc6 grabs a pawn, but 22...♗xc6 leaves Black much better with his big centre, so perhaps White should have tried 22 f4 to at least break up the black pawns, although after 22...exf4 23 ♕xf4 ♖xa7 Black is doing well) 22...♗xg5 ♘3 ♕xf8 ♕xf8 (White has given up two pieces for a rook, but his knight remains trapped) 24 ♖b5 cxb5 25 ♗xb5 ♗d8 (also possible is 25...♕d6, as 26 ♗e8+ ♔g7 27 ♖ac1 ♖xa2 28 ♖c8 ♖xb2 29 ♗g8+ ♖h6 does not lead anywhere) 26 ♗xe5 d3 27 ♖fd1 d2 28 a4! ♕b4 and Black won easily in R.Kempinski-F.Nijboer, Hoogeveen 2010.

c2) 20 ♖e1 ♖a6 (even simpler is 20...♗d7!, as in I.De Carlos Arregui-F.Munoz Moreno, correspondence 2007) 21 ♖c8! (Black is better after 21 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 or 21 ♗c5 ♖d7) 21...e5 22 ♕f4! ♗c7! with complications in P.Nikolic-L.McShane, German League 2005.

16 ♕g2

After 16 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 17 ♖a7 ♖b6 the knight remains trapped.

16...♕b7



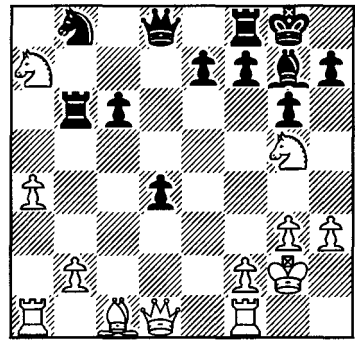
17 a4

White can also try 17 ♖f3 and then:

a) 17...♗d7 18 a4 ♕xf3 19 ♗xf3 c6 wins back the piece, but after 20 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 21 a5 White's bishop-pair and a-pawn gave him the initiative in F.5voboda-J.Galuska, correspondence 2000.

b) 17...c6 18 b3 ♖a6 19 ♕b2 e5 20 ♖e1 ♖xa7 21 ♖xe5 c5 22 ♕xb7 ♖xb7 23 ♗f3 ♖a7 24 ♖d3 ♖d7 25 a4 ♗a8! gave Black sufficient counterplay in G.Castillo-G.5taf, correspondence 2003.

17...♕xg2 18 ♖xg2 c6



Black has finally trapped the knight.

19 f4

After 19 ♗d3 ♗d7 20 ♖xc6?! ♖xc6 it was Black who had the edge in T.Bottema-B.Andersson, Stockholm 1987.

19...e6

This is fine, but 19...♖b7, 19...♖a6 and 19...♗d7 look like decent alternatives.

20 b4 ♗d7 21 ♕a3

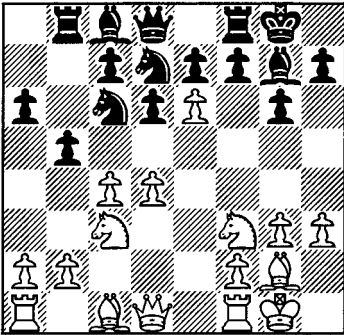
After 21 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 22 b5 Black has sufficient play with either 22...♖e7 or 22...♖a5. It is not so easy for White to use his queenside pawns, while Black has play in the centre and a more se-

cure-looking king. With the text, White goes for the exchange, but Black has more than enough compensation.

21...♙xa7 22 b5 ♚d8 23 ♜c5 cxb5 24 ♜xb6 ♙xb6 25 axb5 ♙xb5

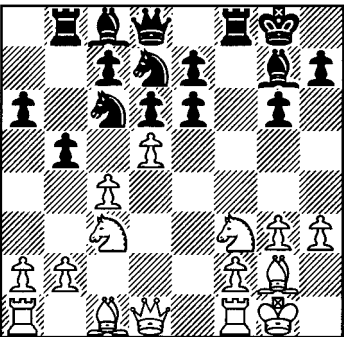
Black had no problems here in K.Thorsteins-F.Hellers, Groningen 1984.

B22) 11 e6



This leads to very complicated play which will test the resourcefulness and creativity of both players. Despite the sharp nature of the ensuing play, the positions that arise are still relatively unexplored.

11...fxe6 12 d5



White has sacrificed a pawn to create pressure on the light squares, especially with ♖f3-d4. Black has several possibilities:

B221: 12...exd5
B222: 12...♖ce5
B223: 12...♖a5

There are a couple of rare alternatives:

a) 12...bxc4?! 13 dxc6 ♖c5 occurred in I.Manor-M.Hebden, London 1987. Here 14 ♙e2 d5 15 ♖e5 would leave Black struggling to justify his piece sacrifice.

b) 12...♖a7!? looks strange, but has no obvious flaw: 13 dxe6 (after 13 ♖d4 both 13...♖b6 and 13...♖e5 look playable) 13...♖b6 (or 13...♖c5!?) 14 ♖g5 (or 14 cxb5 ♖xb5 15 ♖xb5 axb5 16 ♖d4 when both 16...♖b7 and 16...♖xd4!? 17 ♙xd4 ♜xe6 are possible), and now instead of 14...bxc4 15 a4! with some initiative in M.Ragger-M.Krylov, Moscow 2010, Black could try 14...♖xc4!?

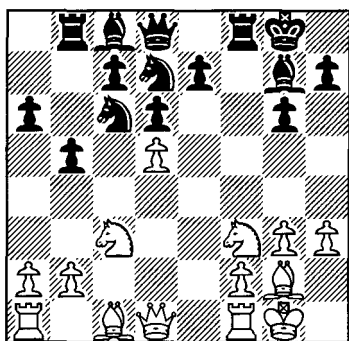
B221) 12...exd5

This move has been played more than the others. Black has not scored very well, but I think it remains playable.

13 cxd5

Instead 13 cxb5 is not dangerous. After 13...axb5 (Black can also play 13...♖a5 which is Line B223) 14 ♖g5 ♖d4 15 ♜xd5+ ♖h8 16 ♜e3 (if 16 ♖f7+ ♜xf7 17 ♜xf7 ♖e5 and ...♜xh3 is good for Black) 16...c5 17 ♜xd4 cxd4 18 ♖e6

♖b6 19 ♖xf8 dxc3 20 ♗e6 (better is 20 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 21 bxc3 ♕xc3, although Black has good compensation for the exchange) 20...cxb2 21 ♖b1 ♕f6 and Black was much better in K.Aseev-G.Lane, London 1994.



13...♗a5

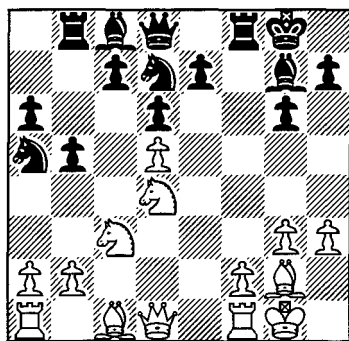
Black has other moves:

a) 13...♗e5 is natural, but the knight is not stable here: 14 ♗d4 ♗b6 (very bad is 14...c5 15 dxc6 ♗b6 16 b3 e6 17 ♕e3, K.Aseev-H.Tirard, Paris 1996) 15 ♗ce2 (White intends ♗f4 with a grip on the e6-square, but 15 f4!? c5 16 dxc6 ♗f7 17 ♕e3 looks dangerous: for example, 17...♗c4 18 ♕f2 ♗xb2? 19 ♖e2 ♗c4 20 ♗d5 wins for White) 15...♕d7 (15...c5? 16 dxc6 ♗f7 17 ♗f4 d5 18 ♗de6 ♕xe6 19 ♗xe6 ♖d6 20 ♖xf8 ♖xf8 21 ♕e3 and White was winning in D.Ippolito-V.Grechikhin, Groningen 1996) 16 ♗f4 ♖c8 17 ♗de6 ♖f6 18 ♗xg7 ♗xg7 19 b3 c5 with an unclear position in D.Lopushnoy-O.Loskutov, Krasnoyarsk 1998.

b) Again the strange move 13...♗a7!? looks playable. After 14 ♗d4 (14 ♕e3

♗b6 15 ♗g5 ♖e8 looks okay for Black) 14...♗f6 (another idea is 14...♗c5!? intending 15 b4 e5!) 15 ♖e1 (15 b4 e5! 16 dxe6 c5 is another thematic idea) 15...b4 16 ♗ce2 c5! 17 dxc6 e5 18 ♗b3 d5 19 ♕g5 ♗xc6 20 ♕xf6 ♖xf6 21 ♖xd5+ ♗h8 22 ♖xc6 ♖xf2+ 23 ♗h1 ♕b7! 24 ♖xb7 ♖xb7 25 ♕xb7 e4 the tactics had clearly worked out in Black's favour in A.Partenheimer-J.Nunn, German League 2001.

14 ♗d4



14...♗b6!?

This is untried, but looks best:

a) 14...♗f6 does not look combative enough. After 15 b4 e5 16 dxe6 c5 17 bxa5 cxd4 18 ♗e2 ♕xe6 19 ♗xd4 White was better in E.Moldobaev-E.Gleizerov, Pavlodar 1987.

b) 14...♗e5 is the most common. White has:

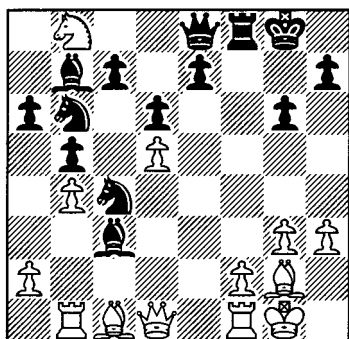
b1) 15 b4 ♗ac4 16 f4 (or 16 ♖b1 ♕d7 17 ♗h2 ♖c8!?) 16...♗f7! 17 ♗c6 ♖e8 18 ♗xb8 ♕f5! 19 ♖f3 ♖xb8 20 g4 ♖b6+ 21 ♗h2 was R.Hübner-J.Nunn, Johannesburg 1981. Here 21...♕e4! gives Black good play.

b2) The positional approach 15 $\text{d}ce2!$ is best. After 15... $\text{d}d7$ 16 $\text{d}f4$ the grip on the e6-square gave White excellent compensation for the pawn in A.Goldin-G.Kosanovic, Belgrade 1988.

15 b4

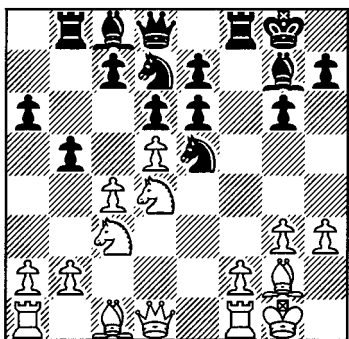
Instead 15 $\text{d}ce2$ is met with the typical 15...e5! 16 dxe6 c5 when 17 b4!? cxd4 18 bxa5 $\text{d}c4$ 19 $\text{d}xd4$ $\text{e}b7$ is fairly level.

15... $\text{d}ac4$ 16 $\text{d}c6$ $\text{e}e8$ 17 $\text{d}xb8$ $\text{e}xc3$ 18 $\text{b}b1$ $\text{e}b7$



With unclear play and tests required.

B222) 12... $\text{d}ce5$ 13 $\text{d}d4$



White cannot be satisfied with 13

$\text{d}g5?! \text{d}c5$ or 13 cxb5 $\text{d}xf3+!$ 14 $\text{e}xf3$ when both 14...axb5 and 14... $\text{d}e5$ 15 $\text{e}g2$ axb5 favour Black.

13... $\text{d}b6$

This is the only move ever played (or even mentioned), but there are other moves worth looking into, especially as the text is not looking so good:

a) 13... $\text{e}e8?! \text{c}xb5$ (less clear is 14 $\text{d}xe6$ bxc4 leading to variation 'b1' below) 14... $\text{d}c5$ 15 b4 $\text{d}cd3$ 16 bxa6 $\text{e}xa6$ 17 b5 gives White a clear advantage.

b) 13...bxc4!? and here:

b1) 14 $\text{d}xe6 \text{e}e8$ 15 $\text{d}xg7$ (15 $\text{d}xc7 \text{e}f7$ 16 $\text{d}e6 \text{d}d3$ 17 $\text{d}xf8 \text{e}xf8$ gives Black compensation for the exchange) 15... $\text{e}xg7$ 16 $\text{e}d4 \text{e}g8$ 17 f4 $\text{d}d3$ is unclear.

b2) 14 f4 $\text{d}d3$ 15 $\text{d}c6 \text{e}e8$ 16 dxe6 (or 16 $\text{d}xb8 \text{d}xb8$ with compensation) 16... $\text{e}xb2!$ 17 $\text{e}xb2 \text{d}7c5$ is a shocking rook sacrifice, but White has trouble holding on to the material: for example, 18 $\text{e}c2 \text{d}xb2$ 19 $\text{e}xb2 \text{d}a4$. White should instead play the cool 18 $\text{b}b1 \text{e}b7$ (18... $\text{d}xb2$ 19 $\text{e}xb2 \text{e}xc3$ runs into 20 $\text{e}b8!$) 19 $\text{d}d5!$.

14 cxb5 $\text{d}xd5$

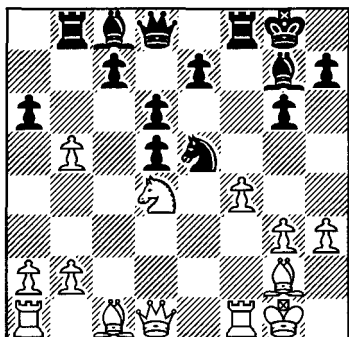
Janjgava considers this 'a safe route to equality'. Matters are not so simple, but the alternatives look even worse:

a) 14...axb5? 15 f4 c5 16 dxc6 $\text{d}ec4$ (or 16... $\text{d}f7$ 17 $\text{d}dxb5$) 17 $\text{d}cxb5$ was winning for White in D.Ippolito-C.Airapetian, US Championship, San Diego 2006.

b) 14...exd5 15 f4 c5 16 bxc6 $\text{d}f7$ 17 f5! gxf5 18 $\text{d}xd5 \text{d}xd5$ 19 $\text{e}xd5 \text{e}xd4+$

20 ♖xd4 e6 21 ♗g2 with a big advantage in M.Marin-V.Milov, Batumi 1999.

15 ♜xd5 exd5 16 f4



16...♣5 17 ♗xd5+

The position is messy after 17 bxc6 ♜f7 18 ♗xd5 ♗xh3 or 18 f5 ♖a5.

17...♝h8

Not 17...♜f7 18 ♜c6.

18 ♜e6

Black definitely has counterchances after 18 bxa6 ♗xh3 19 a7 cxd4 20 axb8 ♖ ♖xb8 as the e5-knight is immune.

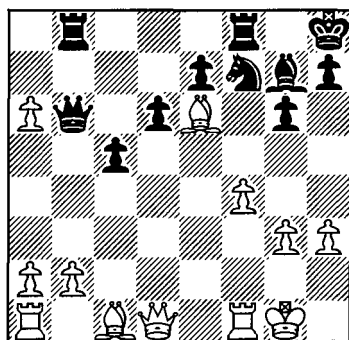
18...♗xe6 19 ♗xe6 ♜f7 20 bxa6

Another example of Black creating counterplay went 20 ♖d5 ♜h6 21 bxa6 ♖a5 22 ♖d3 ♜f5 23 ♜b1 ♜d4 24 ♗d5 ♜b6 25 ♗c4 e6 26 ♖d1 ♖b4 27 b3 d5 28 ♗d3 ♜b5 29 ♝h2 (29 ♖d2!?) 29...♜xa6 30 a4 ♜c3 31 ♗d2 ♜b6 32 ♖f3 ♖d4 33 ♗xc3 ♖xc3 and by now Black had finally equalized in A.Goldin-D.Edelman, New York 1993.

20...♖b6

Janjgava gave this position as unclear. This is true enough, but the onus is still on Black to create enough coun-

terplay. White has the bishop-pair (the light-squared bishop is especially strong), while Black has Benko-like counterplay on the queenside and White's king is not completely comfortable.



21 ♗c4

Instead 21 ♖e2 ♜d8 22 ♗c4 ♜c6 23 ♗e3 was drawn in M.Konopka-V.Babula, Zlin 1998. After 23...♜d4 24 ♗xd4 ♗xd4+ 25 ♝h2 ♖xb2 26 ♜ae1 White still has somewhat better chances, however.

21...e6!

Not 21...♗xb2? 22 ♗xb2+ ♖xb2 23 ♗xf7 ♜xf7 24 ♜b1 ♖xb1 25 ♖xb1 ♜xb1 26 ♜xb1 and White wins.

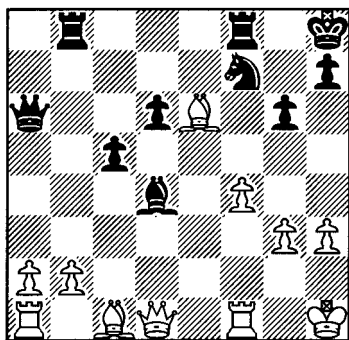
22 ♗xe6 ♗d4+

This is better than 22...c4+ 23 ♝h2 c3 24 bxc3 ♗xc3 25 ♗d2! or 22...♖xa6 23 ♜e1 ♗xb2 24 ♗xb2+ ♜xb2 25 ♜b1, as in both cases White has a serious advantage.

23 ♝h1

After 23 ♝h2 the king looks more exposed on the second rank.

23...♖xa6



24 f5

Instead 24 $\text{e}1$ $\text{c}6+$ 25 $\text{h}2$ $\text{e}5!$ with ideas like $\text{f}3+$ and $\text{d}5$ gives Black good counterplay.

24... $\text{e}5$ 25 $\text{b}1$ $\text{gxf}5$ 26 $\text{d}5$

White acquiesces to a level end-game. Instead 26 $\text{xf}5?$ loses after 26... $\text{xf}5$ 27 $\text{xf}5$ $\text{c}6+$, while 26 $\text{xf}5$ $\text{xa}2$ 27 $\text{h}5$ $\text{f}7$ gives Black good play.

26... $\text{d}3$ 27 $\text{f}4$ $\text{xd}1$ 28 $\text{bxd}1$ $\text{xb}2$ 29 $\text{h}6$ $\text{e}8$ 30 $\text{xf}5$

Here J.Ramik-J.Riha, correspondence 2002, was agreed drawn.

B223) 12... $\text{a}5$

This move has not been played very often, but it is thematic and probably best.

13 $\text{cxb}5$

Worse is 13 $\text{d}4$ $\text{xd}4!$ 14 $\text{xd}4$ e5 when Black will capture on c4. White does not have enough for two pawns.

13... $\text{exd}5$

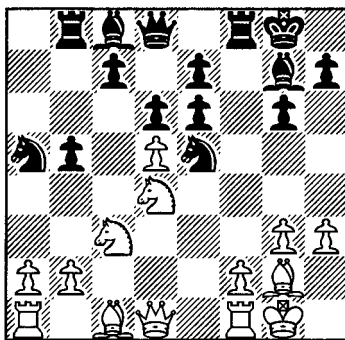
Again, Black has alternatives:

a) 13... $\text{f}6$ 14 $\text{a}4$ $\text{b}7$ (after 14...c5 15 $\text{dxc}6$ $\text{axb}5$ 16 $\text{xb}5$ $\text{dxc}6$ looks okay for Black, but 15 $\text{bxc}6!$ $\text{dxd}5$ 16 $\text{dxd}5$

$\text{exd}5$ 17 $\text{h}4$ gives White a kingside initiative) 15 $\text{d}4$ $\text{c}5$ 16 $\text{d}1$ $\text{axb}5!$? (shocking, but playable) 17 $\text{c}6$ $\text{e}8$ 18 $\text{xb}8$ b4 19 $\text{dxe}6!$? (19 $\text{e}2$ $\text{dxd}5$ is unclear) 19... $\text{bxc}3$ and Black had excellent play in D.Lopushnoy-D.Lobzhanidze, St Petersburg 1997.

b) 13... $\text{b}6$ 14 $\text{g}5$ (14 $\text{bxa}6$ $\text{a}6$ gives Black good play) 14... $\text{axb}5$ 15 $\text{dxe}6$ $\text{e}8$ 16 $\text{e}1$ b4 17 $\text{e}2$ c5 18 $\text{f}4$ $\text{b}7$ 19 $\text{xb}7$ $\text{xb}7$ 20 h4!? was V.Cmilyte-A.Bodnaruk, St Petersburg 2009. Black has a good structure and active pieces, but White has some kingside chances.

c) 13... $\text{axb}5$ is a good alternative. After 14 $\text{d}4$ (instead 14 $\text{g}5$ $\text{f}6$ 15 $\text{xe}6$ $\text{xe}6$ 16 $\text{dxe}6$ b4 17 $\text{e}4$ $\text{xe}4$ 18 $\text{xe}4$ c6 was unclear in N.Grandelius-A.Ziegler, Swedish League 2010, and 14... $\text{c}5!$? was also possible) 14... $\text{e}5$ (another idea is 14... $\text{xd}4!$? 15 $\text{xd}4$ b4 intending 16 $\text{dxe}6$ c5) White has:



c1) 15 $\text{f}4$ b4! gives Black counterplay.

c2) 15 $\text{dxc}b5$ $\text{exd}5$ 16 $\text{xd}5+$ $\text{h}8$ leaves White overextended. Both $\text{hxh}3$ and $\text{c}5$ are threatened.

c3) 15 $\text{dxe}6$ $\text{xe}6$ 16 $\text{dxe}6$ b4 17

♠d5 c6 18 ♠f4 b3 with a murky position in R.Hübner-B.Belotti, Swiss League 1998.

c4) 15 b4 c5! 16 dxc6 ♠exc6 17 ♠e3 ♠xb4 18 ♠b1 was V.Nebolsina-A.Savina, St Petersburg 2010. Now 18...♠xd4! 19 ♠xd4 ♠bc6 20 ♠e3 b4 21 ♠e2 ♠a6 leaves White without sufficient compensation for the pawn.

14 ♠d4 ♠f6 15 ♠xd5

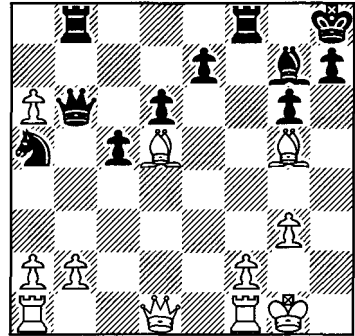
Instead 15 bxa6?! c6 16 a7 ♠a8 gives Black a strong centre and the tactical attempt 17 ♠xc6?! ♠xc6 18 ♠xd5 (18 ♠xd5+ ♠xd5 19 ♠xd5+ ♠h8 20 ♠xc6 ♠xa7 also looks good for Black) 18...♠d7 left White with insufficient compensation for the piece in M.Marin-I.Smirin, Ramat Aviv 2000.

15...♠xd5

Worse is 15...axb5 16 ♠d2! E.Geller-M.Chiburdanidze, USSR Team Championship 1981, while 15...e5? fails to 16 bxa6 exd4 17 a7!.

16 ♠xd5+ ♠h8 17 bxa6 ♠xh3 18 ♠e6

♠xe6 19 ♠xe6 c5 20 ♠d5 ♠b6 21 ♠g5



The pawn structure is similar to that in Line B222, but here Black's knight is on the active a5-square and White is not a pawn up. Black lost quickly after 21...♠be8?! 22 ♠a4! ♠xa6 23 ♠ae1 e5 24 ♠g2 e4 25 ♠h1 h5 26 ♠d1! ♠f3 27 ♠xe4 ♠ef8 28 ♠f4 and 1-0 in G.Szabon-N.Mamedov, Rijeka 2010, but instead 21...♠a7!? protects the e7-pawn while maintaining the pressure on b2. Then 22 ♠e1 c4! gives Black counterplay against f2.

Chapter 3

Panno Variation

7 ♖c3 a6 8 h3 Others

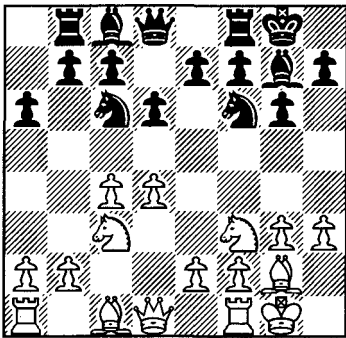
1 d4 ♟f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♞f3 ♙g7 4 g3 0-0 5 ♙g2 d6 6 0-0 ♞c6 7 ♞c3 a6 8 h3

In this chapter we look at lines with 8 h3 where both sides vary from the variations in the previous chapter. Line A covers White deviations, while Line B represents a different approach for Black.

A: 8...♞b8

B: 8...♙d7

A) 8...♞b8



The main move. The critical 9 e4 was considered in the last chapter, so here we look at White's alternatives.

A1: 9 ♙g5

A2: 9 ♙e3

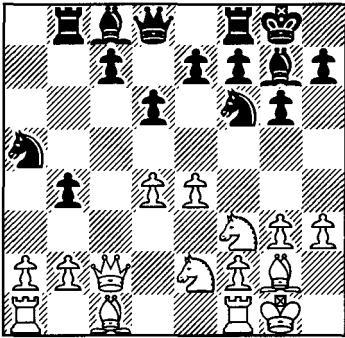
Other moves are rather uncommon:

a) 9 a4 is never dangerous, as White weakens both the b4- and b3-squares. After 9...a5 (also possible is 9...♞a5 10 b3 c5 when both 11 ♙d2 ♞b6 12 dxc5 dxc5 13 ♙f4 ♞a8 and 11 dxc5 ♞d7 12 ♙d2 dxc5 with the idea of ...♞c6 look fine for Black) 10 e4 e5 11 ♙e3 ♞e8!? 12 d5 (Atalik mentions 12 dxe5 dxe5 13 ♞xd8 ♞xd8 14 ♞fd1 ♙e6 15 ♞d5 ♞d7 16 ♞g5 ♞d4!) 12...♞b4 13 ♞e1 ♞d7 14 ♞a2 ♞a6 (or 14...♞xa2 15 ♞xa2 ♞c5 16 ♞d3 b6 with equality – Atalik) 15 ♙d2, as in A.Wojtkiewicz-S.Atalik, Komotini 1993, the simple 15...b6 looks fine for Black.

b) 9 a3 is not so harmless, but Black has a good response here too: 9...♞a5!

(worse is 9...b5 10 cxb5 axb5 11 b4!) 10 d2 (Black is fine after 10 b3 b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 b4 d4) 10...d7 (or 10...c5) 11 e3 c5 12 b4 (this tactical attempt does not give White anything, but 12 e2 cxd4 13 dxd4 de5 14 we2 dec6 leaves his position looking a bit silly) 12...cxd4 13 exd4 was A.Dreev-M.Gurevich, New York 1989. Here Black should just play 13...exd4! 14 dde4 dc6 15 b5 ex3 16 dxc3 dce5 17 sh6 ee8 with a solid position and an extra pawn, since 18 f4? fails to 18...dxc4 19 wd4 wb6!

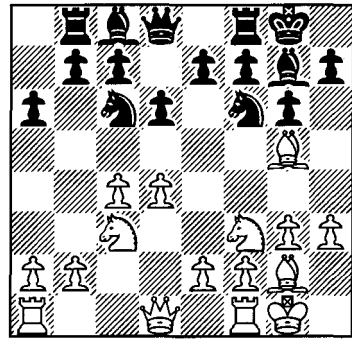
c) 9 wc2 b5 (also possible is 9...ed7 10 e4 b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 e5 ef5 13 we2 dx5 14 dx5 dd5) 10 cxb5 axb5 11 e4 (Black wins back the pawn and equalizes after 11 dxb5 db4 12 wc4 dxa2 13 dxc7 dxc1 14 fxc1 ebx2, as in G.Kuzmin-V.Tseshkovsky, Tashkent 1980) 11...b4 12 de2 da5 and now:



c1) 13 ee3 eb7 (13...ea6 14 ffe1 dc4 is a little too ambitious and 15 eg5 dd7 16 ead1 h6 17 ec1 favoured White in B.Damljanovic-G.Timoshenko, Belgrade 1995) 14 dd2 dd7 with the idea of ...c5 gives Black his share of the play.

c2) 13 df4 b3!? 14 axb3 dxb3 15 ea7 c5 16 dxc5 dxc5 17 e5 dfd7 18 exd6 exd6 19 dd5 eb7 20 ed1 edx5! 21 exd5 wb6 22 ea2 was V.Tukmakov-M.AI Modiahki, Biel 2002, when 22...fe8 would give Black sufficient counterplay. White has the bishop-pair, but Black's pieces are all very active.

A1) 9 eg5



White provokes ...h6 before going to e3. This move has not been seen so much since the famous game J.Lautier-A.Shirov, Manila Interzonal 1990. It turns out that ...h6 hardly harms Black, as White usually keeps the d2-square free for his knight, so the possibility of White gaining a tempo with wd2 is not really an issue.

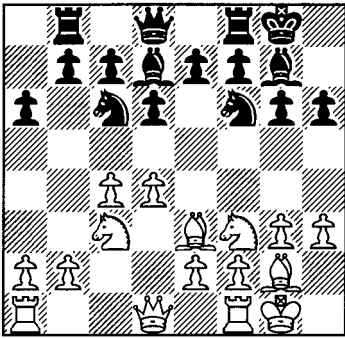
9...h6

Black usually plays this, but there is nothing particularly wrong with 9...b5 10 cxb5 axb5 11 d5 b4! (this is better than 11...da5 12 b4 dc4 13 dd4 ed7 14 e3). Also possible is 9...ed7, as 10 wc1 does not bother Black much: for example, 10...b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 eh6

b4 13 ♙xg7 ♜xg7 14 ♜d1 ♞e8 15 ♜e3 e5 16 dxe5 ♜xe5 17 ♜xe5 ♞xe5 and Black stood well in A.Escobedo Tinajero-A.Zapata, Toluca 2009.

10 ♙e3 ♙d7

We will take this as the main line in order to keep the repertoire compatible with the move order of Line B, but Black can also play 10...b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♜c1 ♜h7 13 d5 (after 13 ♜xb5 ♞xb5 14 ♜xc6 ♞xb2 15 ♜fc1 both 15...♙e6 and 15...♞xe2 are possible) 13...b4 14 dxc6 bxc3 15 bxc3 (or 15 b3 ♜e4!), as in G.Schwartzman-A.Ardeleanu, Romanian Championship 1994. Now 15...♜d5! gives Black good counterplay.



11 ♜d5

This unusual-looking move occurs quite frequently in the Panno. Rather than wait for ...b5-b4, White offers to exchange knights immediately. Here it has some point because of the placement of Black's h-pawn. Instead White can attack the pawn right away with 11 ♜d2, but the queen is not ideally placed here and Black has few troubles after 11...♜h7 12 ♜ac1 b5 and then:

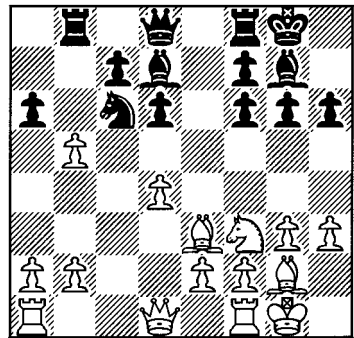
a) 13 ♜d5 ♜e4 14 ♜d3 f5 15 cxb5 ♞xb5 gives Black counterplay. After 16 ♜xc7?! ♜xc7 17 d5 ♜c5 18 ♙xc5 dxc5 19 dxc6 ♙xc6 Black was already better in R.Appel-Z.Lanka, German League 1993.

b) 13 cxb5 axb5 14 d5 ♜a5 15 b3 b4 16 ♜a4 ♙xa4 17 bxa4 ♜e4 18 ♜c2 ♜c3 19 ♜d4 ♜d7 20 a3 ♙xd4! 21 ♙xd4 ♜b3! 22 ♙xc3 (Black is also comfortable after 22 ♜xb3 ♜xe2+ 23 ♜h2 ♜xd4 24 ♜b2 ♜f5 25 axb4 ♜xa4, although this was a better try) 22...bxc3 23 ♞cd1 was V.Trichkov-N.Resika, Prague 2000. Here 23...♜d2 intending 24 ♜fe1 ♞b3! would have been very strong.

11...b5

Black ignores the threat to double his pawns and begins his own play. A solid alternative is 11...e6 12 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 13 ♜d2 ♜h7 (or 13...g5!?).

12 ♜xf6+ exf6 13 cxb5



13...♞xb5!

The rook is quite active here. Instead 13...axb5 14 ♜d2 ♜h7 15 ♜fc1 is a little better for White according to Shirov.

14 ♜d2 g5!?

Black is ready to use his kingside pawn phalanx.

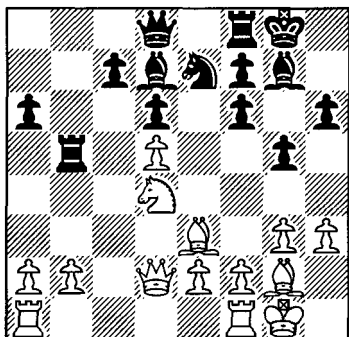
15 d5

Instead 15 Bfc1 Qe7 16 Qe1 Qf5 is unclear according to Lanka, while 15 Qe1 has been the subject of a debate between two Finnish players which turned out well for Black:

a) 15... Re8 16 Bc1 Qb4 17 Qd3 Qxd3 18 exd3 d5 19 Bc5 c6 20 Bxb5 axb5 was at least equal for Black in P.Kekki-J.Norri, Espoo 1993.

b) 15... Qe7 16 f3 f5 17 Qf2?! f4 18 gxf4 gxf4 19 Wxf4 Bxb2 was good for Black in P.Kekki-J.Norri, Helsinki 1994.

15...Qe7 16 Qd4



It looks as though Black will be pushed back, after which White could be happy with the open c-file and his space advantage, but Black has a strong retort.

16...Qxd5! 17 Qxd5 Qxd5 18 Qf5

Instead 18 Qh2 Wc8 forces White's hand anyway, while 18 g4 Re8 19 Qf5 $\text{Wa8!?$ 20 Bfd1 Re5 21 Qxg7 Qxg7 22 Bac1 h5 with the initiative is a possibility mentioned by Bologan.

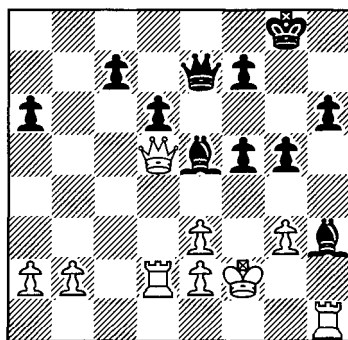
18...Qxf5

Worse is 18... Qxe3 19 fxe3 and White keeps a grip on the f5-square.

19 Wxd5 Qxh3 20 Bfd1 Re8 21 Bxc1 f5 22 Bd2

Black has good compensation for the exchange. True to his nature, Shirov now fuels the fire.

22...Qxe3!? 23 fxe3 Qe7 24 Qf2 Qe5 25 Bb1?



25...Qxg3+! 26 Qxg3 Wxe3+ 27 Wf3 Qxd2 28 Wa8+ Qg7 29 Qxh3 Wxe2 30 Wd5 Qg6

30... Wf2 was even faster, but the text is good enough.

31 Wd4 f4 32 Bg1 f5

0-1 J.Lautier-A.Shirov, Manila Interzonal 1990.

A2) 9 Qe3

This is White's main alternative to the 9 e4 of Chapter 2.

9...b5

Black can also play 9... Qd7 first (which could also arise from 8... Qd7 9 h3 Bb8) 10 Bc1 (Black can be happy after 10 a4 a5 or 10 d5 Qa5 11 Qd2 c5)

10...b5 11 ♗d2 which brings us back to the main line.

10 ♗d2

This is almost universally played, but also possible is 10 cxb5 axb5 and now:

a) 11 ♗d2 ♗d7 12 ♖c1 b4 (this is good, but 12...e6, 12...e5 and 12...♖c8 13 ♗h2 ♖a6!? are other possibilities) 13 ♗cb1 (Black seized the initiative after 13 ♗a4 ♗a5 14 b3 ♖c8 15 ♗h2 ♖b5! in D.Stephson-V.Milov, Suncoast 1999) 13...♗a5 14 b3 c6 is pleasant for Black. White's pieces are all jumbled up.

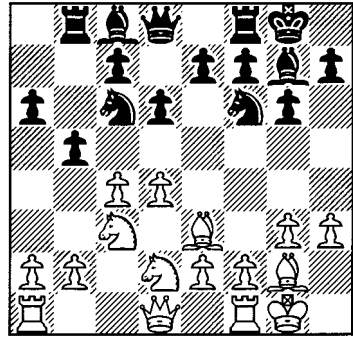
b) 11 ♖c1 ♗d7 12 d5 ♗a5 13 b3 b4 14 ♗b1 ♖c8!? (Black has scored tremendously here and is spoilt for choice; another promising continuation is 14...c6 15 dxc6 ♗xc6, as in Y.Stepak-J.Mestel, Beersheba 1984) 15 ♗h2 ♖b7 16 ♗g5 ♖fc8 and Black had the more harmonious position in L.Gutman-A.Zapata, Wijk aan Zee 1987. White already experiences problems with his d5-pawn.

c) 11 d5 ♗a5 12 ♗d4 (practice has also shown that Black has good counterplay after 12 b4 ♗c4 13 ♗a7 ♖b7 14 ♗d4 e5 15 dxe6 fxe6 16 ♖b3 e5 17 ♗e3 ♗h8) 12...b4 13 ♗cb5 (or 13 ♗a4 e5 14 ♗c6 ♗xc6 15 dxc6 ♗e6 with a good position for Black in G.Kaspert-G.Mohr, Austrian League 1995) and here:

c1) 13...e5 14 dxe6 c5 15 exf7+ ♖xf7 16 ♗c6 ♗xc6 17 ♗xc6 ♖b6 18 ♗xd6 ♖xc6 19 ♗xf7 ♖xd1 20 ♖fxd1 ♗xf7 21 ♖ac1 ♗f8 and Black had the better ending in M.Cuellar Gacharna-R.Byrne, Leningrad 1973. However, 17 ♗xd6!? would

have caused him more problems.

c2) 13...♗xd5! is promising: 14 ♗xd5 c5 15 ♗g2 ♗d7 16 ♖d3 ♖b6 and Black won back the piece while keeping the initiative in E.Khasanova-G.Timoshenko, Katowice 1990.



10...♗d7

This is the main move and is again consistent with the move order of Line B. In this particular position Black does have a couple of other possibilities, however:

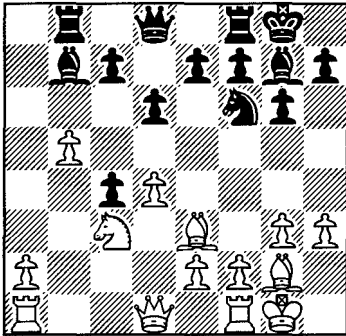
a) 10...♗b7 is an interesting tactical possibility, but I think White may find a way to an edge:

a1) 11 ♖c1 ♗a5 12 cxb5 ♗xg2 13 ♗xg2 axb5 14 b4 ♗c4 15 ♗xc4 bxc4 16 b5 d5 17 a4 ♖a8 18 ♖a1 c6 was fine for Black in E.Bareev-J.Howell, Gausdal 1986.

a2) 11 d5 ♗e5 (Black could consider 11...♗a5!? 12 cxb5 axb5 13 b4 ♗c4 14 ♗xc4 bxc4) 12 b3 c5 13 ♖c1 ♖a5 14 a4 (not 14 f4? ♗fg4!) 14...b4 (14...bxa4 15 ♗xa4 also looks better for White) 15 ♗ce4 ♗xe4 16 ♗xe4 leaves White with a small advantage, as Black cannot create any play on the queenside.

a3) 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♖xb5 ♕a5 (Black has compensation for the pawn after 12...♗b4 13 ♗c3 ♙xg2 14 ♗xg2 ♗bd5) 13 ♜a4 ♙xg2 14 ♗xg2 ♜d7 15 ♗c3 ♜xa4 16 ♗xa4 ♗d5 17 ♜ac1 (instead 17 ♜ab1?! ♙xd4! 18 ♙xd4 ♜b4 was fine for Black in A.Greenfeld-J.Nunn, Biel 1986) 17...♜b4 (here 17...♙xd4? fails after 18 ♙xd4 ♜b4 19 ♗c3 ♜xd4 20 ♗f3) 18 b3 ♙xd4 19 ♙xd4 ♜xd4 20 ♗f3 and White is the better coordinated in the ending.

b) 10...♗a5!? looks quite viable after 11 cxb5 axb5 12 b4 ♗c4 13 ♗xc4 bxc4 14 b5 ♙b7 and now:



b1) 15 a4 ♙xg2 16 ♗xg2 ♜c8!? (Black intends to break up White's pawns with ...c6) 17 a5 ♜b7+ 18 d5 (or 18 ♗g1 ♗d5), and now Black has 18...♗xd5! 19 ♗xd5 (even worse is 19 ♜xd5 ♙xc3) 19...e6 winning back the piece with good play.

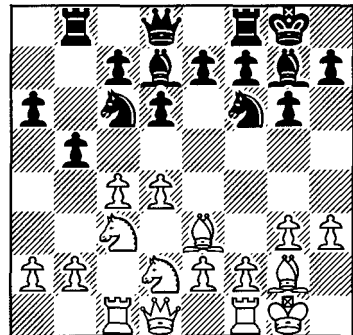
b2) 15 d5 e6 16 dxe6 fxe6 17 ♙xb7 ♜xb7 18 ♜c1 ♜d7 19 a4 c6 with unclear play in M.Tal-N.Rashkovsky, U55R Championship, Baku 1972.

11 ♜c1

Instead 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♜c1 transposes to note 'a' to White's 10th move. White can also play 11 d5 ♗a5 (or 11...♗e5 12 cxb5 axb5 which has scored well for Black) 12 cxb5 axb5 13 b4 ♗c4 14 ♗xc4 bxc4 15 b5 (if 15 a3 ♜c8 16 ♗h2 c6 with counterplay) and here:

a) 15...♙xb5 16 ♗xb5 ♜xb5 17 a4 ♜a5 18 ♙d2 ♜a6 19 ♜c2 looks good for White, but Black held without much trouble after 19...♗d7 20 ♜xc4 ♜a8 21 ♜a3 ♗b6 22 ♜xc7 ♙f6 23 ♜c6 ♗xa4 24 ♜xa8 ♜axa8 in R.Hübner-5.Kindermann, Bremen 1996.

b) 15...♜c8 16 ♜a4 (after 16 ♗h2 ♙xb5 17 ♗xb5 ♜xb5 the move ...♜c8 is rather useful) 16...♙xh3 17 ♜xc4 ♙xg2 18 ♗xg2 ♗g4 and Black had counterplay in M.Saucey-V.Stephan, Pornic 2009.



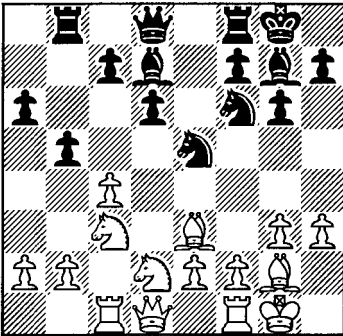
11...e6

This move was considered best by Janjgava and it was also Bologan's choice. Black's position remains very flexible. There are still a couple of alternatives worth considering too:

a) 11...♗a5 12 cxb5 axb5 13 b4 (in-

stead 13 b3 b4 14 ♖cb1 c6! was considered in note 'a' to White's 10th move, above) 13...♖c4 14 ♖xc4 bxc4 15 b5 (not so dangerous is 15 a3 ♖c8 16 ♖h2 ♖a6! 17 ♖a1 e6 18 ♖d2 ♖c6 with a good game for Black in K.Pang-F.Gheorghiu, Nice Olympiad 1974) 15...d5!? (White is better after 15...♖c8 16 ♖h2 c6 17 bxc6 ♖xc6 18 d5 ♖d7 19 ♖d2) 16 ♖xd5 (16 a4 would be met by 16...c6) 16...♖xd5 17 ♖xd5 ♖xh3 18 ♖xc4 (Black can be satisfied after 18 ♖g2?! ♖xg2 19 ♖xg2 ♖d5+ or 18 ♖c6 ♖xb5!?) 18...♖xf1 19 ♖xf1 and White had good compensation for the exchange in Ki.Georgiev-A.Brustman, Lugano 1987.

b) 11...e5 looks sufficient for Black after 12 dxe5 (or 12 d5 ♖e7 with nice play on both sides of the board) 12...♖xe5 (worse is 12...dxe5?! 13 cxb5 axb5 14 ♖de4 and the c5-square is weak).



Here White has tried:

b1) 13 b3 should probably be met by 13...♖e8, rather than 13...bxc4 14 f4 ♖c6 15 ♖xc4 when White can claim an edge.

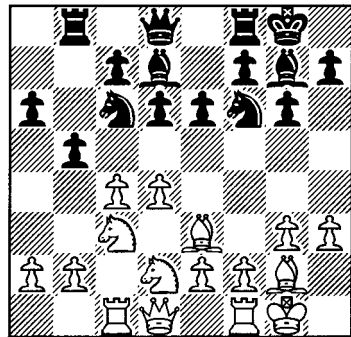
b2) 13 cxb5 axb5 14 b3 (or 14 ♖g5 ♖e6 15 ♖de4 ♖ed7) 14...b4 15 ♖a4 (15

♖ce4 could be met by 15...♖xe4 16 ♖xe4 ♖e8 or 15...♖d5 16 ♖d4 ♖e8) 15...♖e8 looks very comfortable for Black. After 16 ♖e1 c5 17 ♖b2 ♖e6 18 ♖g5 ♖d7 19 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 20 ♖e4 ♖e7 Black's bishop-pair gave him a clear advantage in B.Itkis-A.Istratescu, Bucharest 1994.

b3) 13 c5 and now:

b31) 13...d5 14 ♖f4 ♖e8 15 ♖b3 c6 16 ♖d4 was M.Chetverik-B.Vigh, Harkany 2001. Here Chetverik suggests 16...♖c8 with a level position.

b32) 13...b4 14 ♖ce4 d5! 15 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 16 ♖d4 ♖b5 gives Black active play. After 17 ♖f3? ♖xe2! 18 ♖xe2 ♖xf3 19 ♖xf3 ♖xd4 20 ♖c2 c6 21 ♖xa6 ♖ff6 22 ♖g4 b3 Black won quickly in D.Haessel-S.Muhammad, Chicago 2007.



12 b3

White also chooses to keep the tension. Alternatives:

a) 12 cxb5 axb5 13 ♖de4 ♖xe4 14 ♖xe4 ♖e7 gives Black good play. The e7-knight may come to d5 or f5, and Black has a compact, flexible structure.

b) 12 d5 ♖e7 and now:

b1) 13 dxe6 fxe6 (13...dxe6 also looks quite playable) 14 b3 d5 15 g5 h6 16 xf6 xf6 17 ce4 d8 18 c5 d5 and now 19 c3 b4 20 a4 b5 was very good for Black in D.Paunovic-V.Milov, Villarrobledo (rapid) 2008, while 19 c6 could be met by 19...dxe4! 20 cxd7 e3! with excellent play.

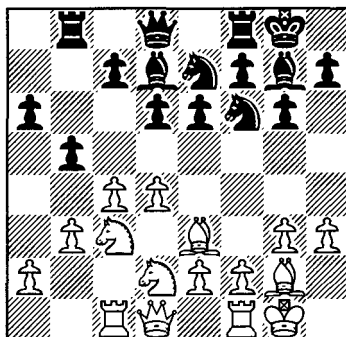
b2) 13 b3 gives Black several attractive options:

b21) 13...b4!? is untried but looks promising: for example, 14 ce4 de4 15 de4 (after 15...exd5 the h3-pawn is loose) 15...exd5 16 cxd5 b5! gives Black promising counterplay.

b22) 13...d5 14 g5 (Stohl points out that 14 a7 a8! 15 dxe6 de6 16 xa8 xa8 17 e4 dxg3! 18 fxg3 xa7+ is promising for Black) 14...h6 15 xf6 xf6 is unclear, but following 16 c5?! dxc5 17 ce4 exd5 18 xf6+ xf6 19 xd5 dxg3! 20 fxg3 d4+ Black was winning in A.Robert-F.Jenni, Biel 2001.

b23) 13...exd5 14 dx5 dxd5 15 cxd5 d5 16 f4 g5 17 e4 is rather murky: 17...gxf4 18 exf5 xf5 19 f3 g5 (or 19...e5 20 gxf4 b2!?) 20 gxf4 f6 (instead 20...d8 21 c6 d7 22 c2 f5!?) was unclear in S.Novikov-A.Zhigalko, Peniscola 2002, but White could have considered 22 xa6 a8 23 xa8 xa8 24 c1) 21 fe1 (21 xc7 fe8 with the idea of ...b2 gives Black good counterplay) 21...be8 (21...fe8!?) 22 d1 was V.Korchnoi-L.McShane, Drammen 2004. Here Black should have played 22...xe1 23 xe1 c3 with counterplay.

12...d7



Black has a compact, flexible position. Already White needs to be concerned with ...d5.

13 g5

White acquiesces to the exchange of this bishop and takes care to avoid compromising his pawn structure. This does not lead to much, but the alternatives have fared even worse:

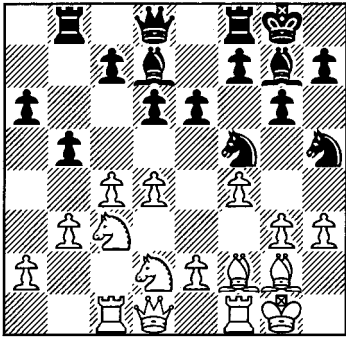
a) 13 cxb5 axb5 14 d3 b4 15 d1 d5 16 g5 was drawn here in V.Jakovljevic-S.Dujkovic, Herceg Novi 2007, although Black certainly could have played on.

b) 13 g4 prevents ...d5, but Black has no trouble creating counterplay: 13...b4 14 dcb1 (14 a4 could also be met with 14...h5) 14...h5 15 g5 dh7 16 d3 d5 17 d3 e5 18 dxe5 de3 19 xe3 e8 20 h4 xe5 21 de5 xe5 22 d3 e7 was comfortable for Black in B.Jones-E.Efendiyeu, correspondence 2006. White looks a bit overextended on the kingside.

c) 13 d3 gives the e3-bishop a retreat, but this move still makes a

strange impression, as the knight looks better on d2. After 13...♗c6 14 ♖g5 b4 15 ♖b1 ♖e4 16 ♖xe7 ♜xe7 17 ♜d3 f5 18 ♖fd2 ♖xd2 19 ♖xd2 ♖d7 20 e3 e5 Black already had the initiative in R.Hübner-A.Shirov, Frankfurt (rapid) 1996.

d) 13 f4?! makes room for the bishop and looks constructive, but this advance runs into tactical problems after 13...♖f5 14 ♖f2 ♖h5! and now:



d1) 15 ♖h2 drops a pawn for very little: 15...b4 16 ♖ce4 ♖xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 18 g4 ♖g7 19 e3 ♖c6 20 g5 ♖e8 (20...f5!? 21 ♖f6+ ♜xf6 22 gxf6 ♜xf6 also looks good) 21 ♜e1 f5 22 gxf6 ♖xf6 23 ♖g5 ♜e7 and White's compensation looked insufficient in K.Josefsson-T.Runting, correspondence 1995.

d2) 15 ♖de4 has been seen in practice several times, but Black can quickly get the advantage with 15...b4! 16 e3 (White's position fell apart after 16 g4 ♖xf4 17 gxf5 exf5 in I.Danilov-V.Nevednichy, Calarasi 1995, while 16 ♖b1 d5 17 cxd5 exd5 18 ♖c5 ♖hxg3 was also grim for White in E.Scarella-

P.Zarnicki, Mar del Plata 1997) 16...bxc3 17 g4 ♖xd4 (or 17...♖f6 18 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 19 gxf5 exf5 20 ♜xc3 ♜e8) 18 gxh5 ♖f5 19 ♖xc3 e5 and Black was obviously better in L.Spassov-A.Kovalev, Porz 1990.

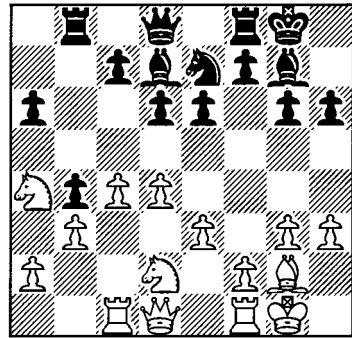
13...b4

13...h6 at once also looks fine.

14 ♖a4

After 14 ♖ce4? ♖xe4 15 ♖xe4 f5! 16 ♖d2 ♖xd4 clips a good pawn, while 14 ♖cb1 h6 (or 14...a5 15 e4 e5 16 d5 ♖e8 17 ♜e2 f6 18 ♖e3 f5 with counterplay in G.Windebank-J.Soberano, correspondence 2006) 15 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 16 e3 ♖g7 is similar to the main line, except that here White's knight is very passive on b1.

14...h6 15 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 16 e3 ♖g7



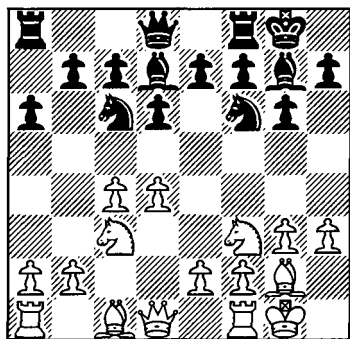
The position is fairly level. Black has the bishop-pair, but White is very solid. Black can exchange on a4, although White's other knight will then find a comfortable post on b3. A couple of examples:

a) 17 ♖b2 c5 18 ♖f3 ♖c6 19 ♖a4 (a strange waste of time) 19...♜c7 20 dxc5 dxc5 21 ♖d2 ♖xa4 22 bxa4 ♜fd8 23 ♜c2

♠c6 (Black could consider keeping more tension and playing on with 23...♠c8!?)
 24 ♠b3 ♠a5 ½-½ J.Nogueiras-A.Khalifman, Lucerne 1997.

b) 17 ♖c2 ♠xa4 18 bxa4 c5 19 dxc5 dxc5 20 ♠b3 ♖c7 21 ♜fd1 ♜fd8 22 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 23 ♜d1 ♜xd1+ 24 ♖xd1 ♠f8 saw White's pressure against the c5-pawn compensate for his own weaknesses and the game was soon drawn in U.Adianto-E.Kengis, Sydney 1991.

B) 8...♠d7

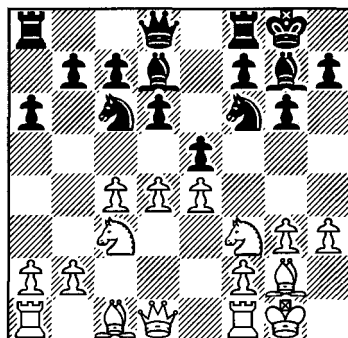


This developing move has been favoured by such grandmasters as Bologan and Shirov (both of whom learned the system from Lanka), as well as Fedorov and Socko. Black avoids the complications of Chapter 2, as he will now meet 9 e4 with 9...e5.

9 e4

This is still critical. After quieter moves play will generally transpose to variations we have covered under Line A: for example, 9 ♠g5 h6 10 ♠e3 ♜b8 is Line A1, while 9 ♠e3 ♜b8 10 ♜c1 b5 11 ♠d2 transposes to Line A2.

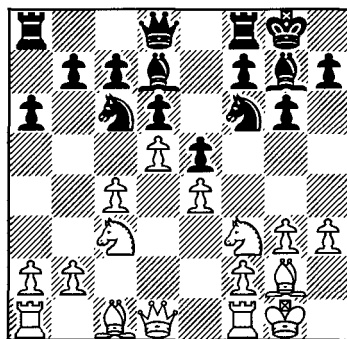
9...e5



This is the main point behind Black's 8th move. Instead of creeping around on the flanks and allowing White to advance his e-pawn, Black is ready to fight in the centre. If Black is not going to play ...b5, then ...♠d7 is a more useful move than ...♜b8. Moreover, in some cases, as we shall see, Black is better off having his rook on the a-file. White has:

- B1: 10 d5**
- B2: 10 ♠e3**
- B3: 10 dxe5**

B1) 10 d5



Advancing the d-pawn is very natural, but Black is specifically ready for this.

10...♗d4!

This pawn sacrifice is one of the main ideas behind 8...♗d7.

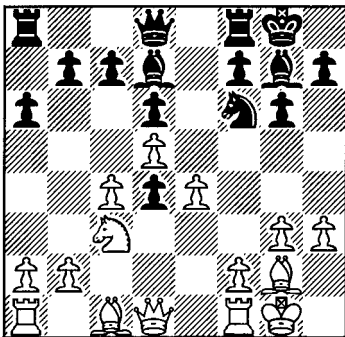
11 ♖xd4

Black is also able to create counterplay if White declines the pawn with 11 ♗e3 ♖xf3+ 12 ♖xf3 ♗c8! 13 ♗g5 (if 13 ♖h2 ♖g4+! and the knight is untouchable, while 13 g4 could be met with 13...h5 or 13...b5) 13...♗h5 (Black is still prepared to offer a pawn) 14 g4 ♖f4 15 ♗xf4 exf4 16 ♖xf4 b5 and here:

a) 17 c5 b4 18 ♗d1 ♗b5 19 ♖e1 ♗d8 (not 19...dxc5 20 e5) 20 c6 ♗e5 21 ♗d2 ♖f6 with compensation in 5.Vijayalakshmi-V.Saravanan, Nagpur 2002.

b) 17 cxb5 axb5 18 a3 ♖b8 19 ♖fc1 b4 20 ♗d1 ♗a4 and Black had good counterplay in A.Cioara-A.Riazantsev, Rijeka 2010.

11...exd4



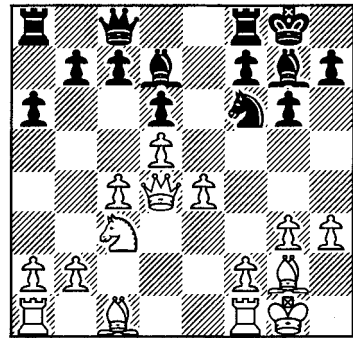
12 ♖xd4

White can try to round up the pawn

in a more convenient way with 12 ♗e2, but Black still manages to create counterplay after 12...♖e8 13 ♗d3 (or 13 f3 c5 14 dxc6 bxc6 15 ♖xd4 ♖b6) 13...♗c8 14 ♖h2 b5 15 b3 bxc4 16 bxc4 c5 17 dxc6 ♗xc6 18 f3 d5!? (Bologan suggests 18...♗d7 19 ♖xd4 ♗e5 20 ♖e2 ♗d7 which also looks fine) 19 exd5 ♖xd5 20 ♖xd4 (not 20 cxd5 ♗b5) 20...♖b4 and Black has the initiative.

12...♗c8!

This is the point of Black's play. Because the natural 13 ♖h2 fails to 13...♖g4+, White must weaken his king-side in order to hold on to the pawn.



13 h4

Returning the pawn is also possible, but White cannot hope for an advantage:

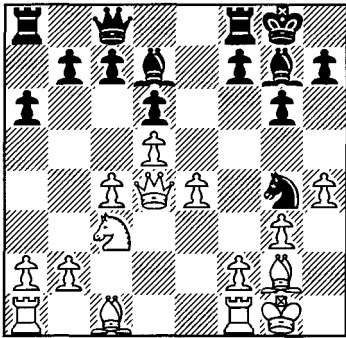
a) 13 e5 ♖h5 wins back the pawn immediately.

b) 13 ♗h6 ♗xh6 14 ♖xf6 ♗xh3 15 ♖h4 ♗xg2 16 ♖xg2 ♗g7 is level.

c) 13 ♗g5 ♖h5 14 ♗d2 ♗xh3 15 ♗h6 ♗xh6 16 ♖xh6 ♖g4 17 ♖ae1 ♖ae8 was fine for Black in V.Malakhov-V.Bologan, Selfoss 2003.

d) 13 ♖d3 ♗xh3 14 ♕e3 ♜e8 15 ♗d4 was E.Cordova-A.Zhigalko, Khanty-Man-siysk Olympiad 2010. Now 15...♗xg2 (or 15...♖g4!?) 16 ♗xg2 ♖g4!? looks safe enough for Black.

13...♖g4



14 ♖d2

Instead 14 ♖d3 ♗e5 15 ♖e2 b5 transposes to the main line, while 14 ♖d1 can be met in a couple of ways:

a) 14...b5 15 cxb5 (15 ♖e2 transposes to the main line) 15...axb5 16 ♗e2 ♖a6 (too ambitious is 16...♜a4 17 f3 ♗e5 18 b3! ♜a6 19 ♕e3 f5 20 f4 ♖g4 21 ♗d4 ♗xd4+ 22 ♖xd4 with an edge for White in V.Neverov-V.Bologan, Moscow 2004) 17 ♗d4 ♖b6 18 ♗c6 b4 19 ♖e2 ♗xc6 20 dxc6 ♗e5 is fine for Black (Bologan).

b) 14...♗e5 15 ♖b3 b5! 16 cxb5 axb5 17 ♗f4 (or 17 ♗xb5 ♖b8 18 ♗a3 ♖xb3 19 axb3 ♗d3 with good compensation in V.Neverov-R.Antoniewski, Prerov 2001) 17...♗d3 18 ♜fd1 ♗xf4 19 gxf4 ♖d8 20 h5 b4! 21 ♖xb4 ♖h4 22 ♖c4 ♖xf4 23 ♜d3 (or 23 ♖xc7 ♗g4) 23...♗e5 and Black had good attacking chances in N.Kazimova-D.Jojua, Baku 2010.

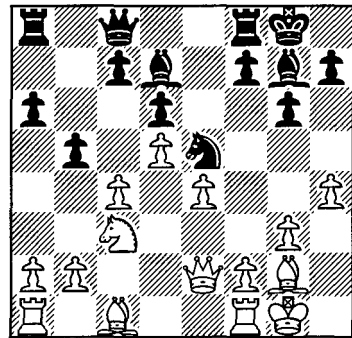
14...b5

Black uses his lead in development to open a second front.

15 ♖e2

White can try to unravel with 15 cxb5 axb5 16 ♗e2 ♖b7 17 ♖c2 b4, but Black still has good play: for example, 18 ♗f4 ♜xa2! 19 ♜xa2 b3 20 ♜a7! ♖xa7 21 ♖xb3 ♜b8 22 ♖a3 ♖b6 23 b4 h5!? (or 23...♖xb4 and 1/2-1/2, E.Pigusov-E.Kengis, Vienna 1991) 24 ♗f3 ♖xb4 25 ♖xb4 ♜xb4 26 ♜c1 ♜b7 27 ♗g2 ♗e5 28 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 when Black's bishop-pair gave him reason to play on in A.Kharitonov-V.Bologan, Kstovo 1997.

15...♗e5!



Black offers a second pawn to open the queenside.

16 cxb5 axb5 17 ♗xb5

White has also declined the pawn:

a) 17 f4 and now:

a1) 17...♖g4 18 f5 was D.Fernandez-P.Della Morte, Villa Martelli 2007. Here Black should play 18...b4! without delay. If the knight retreats, Black can take on f5, and if 19 ♖xg4 bxc3 with counter-play.

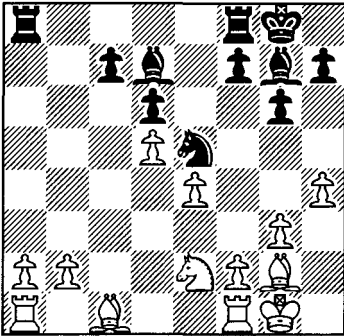
a2) 17...♗c4 18 f5 gxf5 19 exf5 ♕xf5 20 ♖xb5 ♗e5 21 ♕e4 ♕xe4 22 ♖xe4 ♖h3 23 ♖g2 ♖xg2+ 24 ♔xg2 ♖fb8 and with ...♗d3 coming, Black had enough compensation in J.Sriram-D.Chatterjee, New Delhi 2011.

b) 17 ♕f4 b4 and now:

b1) 18 ♕xe5 ♕xe5 19 ♗d1 ♖b7 20 ♗e3 ♕b5 21 ♗c4 ♖a6 22 ♖ac1 ♖xa2 23 f4 ♕d4+ 24 ♔h2 was A.Wojtkiewicz-V.Bologan, Bastia 1999. Here the clever interference move 24...♕c3! wins for Black, although Bologan himself does not even point this out!

b2) 18 ♗d1 ♖a6! 19 ♖xa6 ♖xa6 20 ♕d2 ♖b8 gave Black an excellent Benko Gambit-type ending in T.Klecker-P.Nguyen, Prague 2010.

17...♖a6 18 ♗c3 ♖xe2 19 ♗xe2



For the two pawns Black has a lead in development and tremendous pressure on the queenside.

19...♖fb8!?

This is more ambitious than 19...♕b5, which is also good: 20 ♖e1 ♗d3 21 ♖d1 ♖xb2 (better than 21...♗xc1 22 ♗xc1 ♕xb2 23 ♖b1 ♕a4 24

♗b3 when White has managed to develop and keep one extra pawn) 22 ♕xb2 ♕xb2 23 ♖ab1 ♕xe2 24 ♖d2 ♖xa2 25 ♖xe2 ♖b8 26 ♕f1 ♖b6 27 ♔g2 h5 with a draw in E.Dragomarezkij-S.Nadyrhanov, Sochi 1996. White has no way to exploit the pin along the second rank.

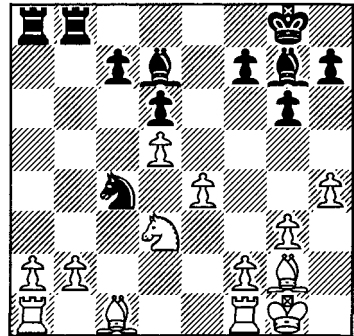
20 ♗f4

White has trouble consolidating after other moves:

a) 20 ♗c3?! ♗d3 21 a4 (or 21 ♗d1 ♕b5 22 ♗c3 ♕c4!?) 21...♗xb2 22 ♕xb2 ♖xb2 23 ♖a3 ♖c2 24 ♗d1 ♖xa4 25 ♖xa4 ♕xa4 was S.Atalik-A.Fedorov, Ohrid 2001. Black has won back both pawns and has the bishop-pair.

b) 20 ♗d4 ♗c4 21 ♗c6 (or 21 ♗b3 ♗xb2 22 ♕e3 ♕b5 23 ♖fb1 ♖a4! when by controlling d4, Black can increase the pressure) 21...♕xc6 22 dxc6 ♗xb2 and Black has the initiative.

20...♗c4 21 ♗d3



21...♕b5

Black has a good alternative in Bologan's suggestion 21...♕a4 22 f3 ♕c2 23 ♗e1 ♕b3 with pressure on White's queenside.

22 ♖e1

Instead 22 ♖d1 ♗a4 23 ♜f1 allows Black to repeat with 23...♗b5. Also possible is 23...♗a3!? 24 ♗f4 ♗c2 25 ♗e1 ♗xb2 26 ♗xc2 ♗xc2 27 ♖ab1 ♗d4 28 ♖fe1 and here instead of 28...♖xa2?! which allowed White to fight for the initiative with 29 e5! in D.Fridman-V.Bologan, Santo Domingo 2002, Black could play 28...♗c3!: for example, 29 ♖xb8+ ♖xb8 30 ♖d1 ♗e2+ 31 ♗f1 ♗xf4 32 gxf4 ♖b2 and Black has no problems.

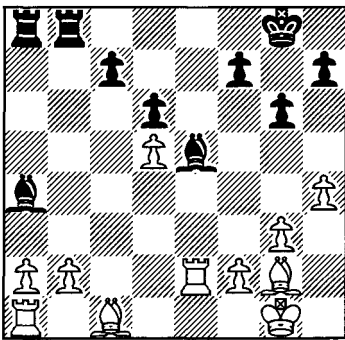
22...♗a4

Black does not achieve anything after 22...♗a3?! 23 ♗b4!.

23 e5

White could play the passive 23 ♜f1, which invites a repetition, while after 23 f3 ♗c2 24 ♗f1 ♗xd3 25 ♗xd3 ♗xb2 26 ♗xb2 ♖xb2 27 ♖ab1 ♖bxa2 28 ♖e2 ♖2a3 (Bologan) Black has won back both pawns and has a slight initiative.

23...♗xe5 24 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 25 ♖e2



25...♗b3!?

Or 25...♗d1 26 ♖d2 ♗b3 27 a3 ♖a4 when White will have trouble untangling.

26 a3 ♗a4 27 ♖b1

Instead 27 ♖xe5 dxe5 28 d6 does not work after 28...c6.

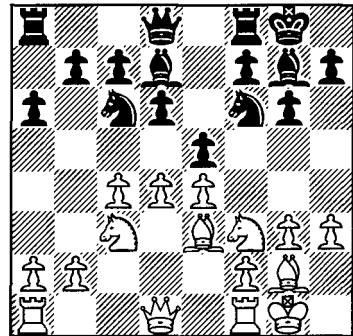
27...♗b5 28 ♖d2 ♖b7 29 ♗e4 ♗c4 30 b4 ♖e8! 31 ♖c2?

Better was 31 ♖h2 ♗xg3+ 32 ♖xg3 ♖xe4 33 ♗b2 with a level position.

31...♗b5 32 ♗h6?! ♗g7 33 ♗xg7 ♖xe4 34 ♗f6 ♗d3

And Black won the exchange in E.Pigusov-V.Bologan, French League 2004.

B2) 10 ♗e3

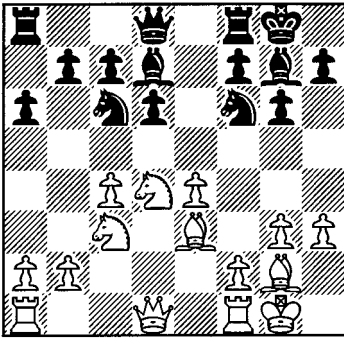


White maintains the tension in the centre while strengthening the d4-square.

10...exd4

Black does not have any especially good waiting moves and White was ready to advance his d-pawn. Therefore Black plays in the style of the classical lines of the Fianchetto Variation by exchanging on d4. He relies on piece play to compensate for White's space advantage.

11 ♗xd4



11... $\text{e}8$

The immediate 11... $\text{c}8!$? is also possible. After 12 $\text{h}2$ (White should consider 12 $\text{dxc}6$ $\text{bxc}6$ 13 $\text{h}2$), 12... $\text{e}5$ 13 $\text{e}2$ $\text{c}5!$ is a typical idea reminiscent of the Gallagher Variation. Black accepts a weakness on d6, but intends a quick ...b5 with good counterplay. White has:

a) After 14 $\text{b}3$ Black quickly takes over the initiative: 14... $\text{e}6$ 15 $\text{d}5$ (this allows Black to repair his structure, but 15 $\text{d}2$ $\text{b}8$ 16 $\text{f}4$ $\text{d}c6$ is also okay for Black) 15... $\text{dxd}5$ 16 $\text{cxd}5$ $\text{d}d7$ 17 $\text{c}c2$ (not 17 $\text{f}4$ $\text{d}b5$) 17...b5 18 $\text{d}d2$ $\text{c}c4$ was J.Gregor-J.Bejtovic, Prague 2011. Black has a dream Benoni: he has exchanged a minor piece, achieved ...b5 and his knight is ready to enter White's position.

b) 14 $\text{d}c2$ b5 15 $\text{cxb}5$ $\text{axb}5$ 16 $\text{dxb}5$ $\text{wb}8$ 17 $\text{dca}3$ $\text{aa}5$ (Black could have played the immediate 17... $\text{d}eg4+$! 18 $\text{hxg}4$ $\text{d}xg4+$ 19 $\text{c}g1$ $\text{d}xe3$ 20 $\text{fxe}3$ $\text{aa}5$) 18 $\text{d}c3$ $\text{d}eg4+$ 19 $\text{hxg}4$ $\text{d}xg4+$ 20 $\text{c}g1$ $\text{dxc}3$ 21 $\text{d}c4!$ $\text{wb}5$ 22 $\text{d}d2!$ $\text{dxd}2$ 23 $\text{wxd}2$ $\text{aa}6$ 24 $\text{dxd}6$ $\text{wb}8$ 25 $\text{d}f5!$ and White was better in S.Maze-Y.Vovk, French League 2010.

c) 14 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{ee}8$ 15 $\text{d}d2$ b5 16 $\text{cxb}5$ $\text{axb}5$ 17 $\text{f}4$ (if 17 $\text{d}xb5$ $\text{dxb}5$ 18 $\text{wxb}5$ $\text{bb}8$) 17... $\text{d}c4$ 18 $\text{dxc}4$ $\text{bxc}4$ 19 $\text{wxc}4$ $\text{bb}8$ 20 $\text{ff}2$ $\text{bb}4$ 21 $\text{wd}3$ was K.Aseev-A.Kulagin, Sestola 1991. Now 21... $\text{dxe}4!$? 22 $\text{dxe}4$ (22 $\text{dxe}4?$ $\text{dxc}3$) 22... $\text{d}f5$ 23 $\text{wxd}6$ $\text{dxe}4$ 24 $\text{wxc}5$ $\text{wb}7$ would give Black good counterplay.

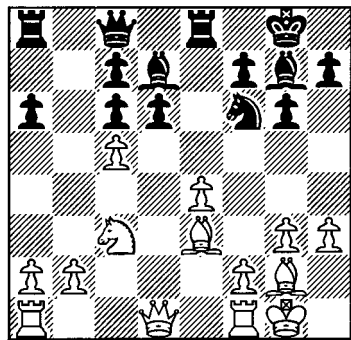
12 $\text{ee}1$

This is the most flexible and the most common, but there are several alternatives:

a) 12 $\text{wd}2$ is inaccurate because after 12... $\text{d}e5$ 13 $\text{b}3?$ fails to 13... $\text{c}5$ 14 $\text{d}de2$ $\text{d}xh3!$.

b) 12 $\text{d}de2$ $\text{d}e5$ (the immediate 12...b5!? is possible as well) 13 $\text{b}3$ b5 14 $\text{f}4$ (this pushes Black back, but it loosens White's position) 14... $\text{d}c6$ 15 $\text{c}c2$ $\text{bxc}4$ 16 $\text{bxc}4$ $\text{bb}8$ 17 $\text{aab}1$ $\text{da}5$ 18 $\text{wd}3$ (the immediate 18 $\text{d}d5$ makes more sense) 18... $\text{d}e6$ 19 $\text{d}d5?$ $\text{dxc}4!$ 20 $\text{wxc}4$ $\text{dxd}5$ and Black had won a pawn in R.Hübner-Z.Efimenko, German League 2004.

c) 12 $\text{dxc}6$ $\text{bxc}6$ (or 12... $\text{dxc}6$ 13 $\text{c}c2$ b5) 13 $\text{c}5$ $\text{c}c8!$ again sees Black taking aim at h3.



After 14 g4 (if 14 ♖h2 d5 15 exd5 cxd5 16 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 17 ♗xd5 ♖b8 looks okay) 14...h5 15 g5 ♘h7 White has tried:

c1) 16 h4 ♙h3 17 cxd6 cxd6 18 f3 ♙xg2 19 ♖xg2 ♙xc3! 20 bxc3 d5 gave Black counterplay in I.Stohl-A.Shirov, Batumi 1999.

c2) 16 ♖h2 d5! 17 ♗d2 (worse is 17 exd5 ♙e5+ 18 f4? ♙xc3 19 bxc3 ♖xe3) 17...♖b8 18 ♖ad1 ♖b4! is murky:

c21) 19 exd5 ♙xh3! 20 ♙xh3 ♖h4 wins for Black.

c22) 19 a3 ♖c4 20 f4 d4 21 ♘e2 dxe3 22 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 23 ♖xd7 ♙xb2 24 ♖d3 ♖xc5 25 ♖xe3 ♖d8 and Black had the initiative in M.Marin-B.Socko, Batumi 1999.

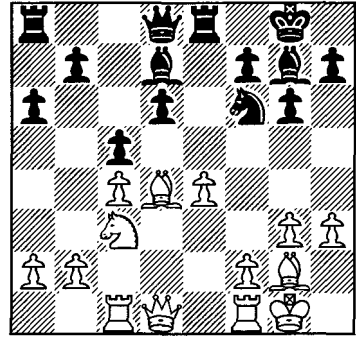
c23) 19 f4!? ♘f8 20 a3 ♖b3 21 ♙d4 ♙xd4 22 ♗xd4 ♖xb2 23 f5 ♗d8 24 ♖d2 ♖xd2 25 ♗xd2 ♗e7 with unclear play in D.Anderton-S.Vinot, correspondence 2004.

d) 12 ♖c1 and now:

d1) 12...♘e5 is Bologan's recommendation. He gives 13 b3 c5 14 ♘de2 ♙c6 15 f4?! ♘ed7 16 ♗xd6 ♘xe4 17 ♙xe4 ♙xe4 18 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 19 ♖f2 ♗e8 20 ♗d3 ♗e6 when Black is doing very well, but a better try for White would be 15 a4!

d2) 12...♗c8 13 ♖h2 ♘e5 14 ♘d5 c5 15 ♘xf6+ ♙xf6 16 ♘e2 b5 17 b3 bxc4 18 bxc4 ♙e6 gives Black counterplay. After 19 ♗a4? ♖b8 20 a3 ♘d3 21 ♖b1 ♘b2 Black won a pawn in K.Arkeil-H.Lefebvre, Uxbridge 2010.

d3) 12...♘xd4 13 ♙xd4 c5 is a typical advance.



It looks weakening, but it gains space and Black can quickly create counterplay with ...b5. If White ever plays ♘d5, Black can capture when the weaknesses on d5 and d6 are covered up. Moreover, if Black did not throw this move in, then a future ♘d5 and cxd5 would leave him suffering for space and the c7-pawn would be weak. After 14 ♙e3 ♙c6 15 f3 b5 White has:

d31) 16 ♖f2 ♗e7 17 ♖d2 ♖ad8 18 b3 bxc4 19 bxc4 ♗c7 20 ♘e2 ♘d7 21 ♙f2 ♘e5 22 f4?! ♘d7 23 ♘c3 (23 ♖xd6 ♙xe4) was drawn here in L.Campos Gambuti-J.Eslon, Mislata 2000, but Black could have won a pawn with 23...♙xc3! 24 ♖xc3 ♘f6.

d32) 16 b3 b4 17 ♘e2 (after 17 ♘d5?! ♘xd5 18 cxd5 ♙b5 Black can quickly play ...f5 or ...a5 with the initiative) 17...a5 18 ♖c2 ♗c7 (the immediate 18...♗e7 looks even better) 19 ♖d2 ♖ed8 20 ♗c2 a4 21 ♖fd1 ♗e7 22 ♖d3 ♖a5 23 ♗d2 axb3 24 axb3 ♘e8 and with the d6-pawn well covered, Black created counterplay on the a-file in L.Van Wely-A.Fedorov, Wijk aan Zee 2001.

12...♖c8

This move, combined with a quick ...c5, will leave the d6-pawn to its fate. Black seems to be able to create enough counterplay, but he could also consider the thematic 12...♗xd4 13 ♕xd4 c5 14 ♕e3 ♕c6. Another idea is to play the noncommittal 12...♖b8. After 13 ♗xc6 (White could follow suit with 13 ♖c1) 13...bxc6 14 ♖d2 ♖c8 15 ♖h2 c5 (15...♖e5!? with ideas of ...♖h5 is also possible) 16 ♖ab1 ♕c6 Black was fine in R.Hübner-T.Radjabov, Leon 2001.

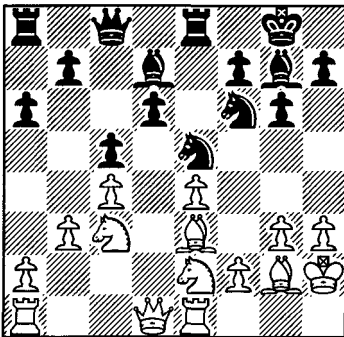
13 ♖h2

Instead 13 ♗xc6 bxc6 14 ♖h2 (14 g4 ♖b8 15 ♖d2 c5 gives Black similar play) 14...♖b8 15 ♖d2 c5 would transpose to Hübner-Radjabov, above.

13...♗e5 14 b3 c5

This typical plan still is still possible even though the d6-pawn is likely to fall.

15 ♗de2



15...b5! 16 ♖xd6

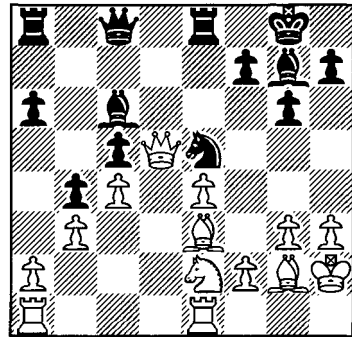
Instead 16 cxb5 axb5 17 ♖xd6 c4 gives Black good compensation according to Bologan, while 16 ♕g5 bxc4 17 ♕xf6 ♕xf6 18 ♗d5 (if 18 ♖xd6 ♕e6)

18...♖d8 19 bxc4 ♗xc4 20 ♖c1 ♗b2 21 ♗xf6+ ♖xf6 22 ♖d2 ♖ab8 23 ♗f4 was played in A.Greenfeld-J.Gdanski, Belgrade 1999. After 23...♕c6! it is difficult to see what White has for the pawn.

16...b4

This is probably too ambitious. Instead Bologan gives the line 16...bxc4 17 bxc4 ♖e6 18 ♖xc5 ♖c6 19 ♖a3 ♗xc4 20 ♖c1 ♗xe3 21 ♖xe3 ♗g4+ 22 hxg4 ♕xc3 23 ♗xc3 ♖xc3 24 ♖f4 ♕xg4 with equality.

17 ♗d5 ♗xd5 18 ♖xd5 ♕c6



19 ♖xc5

Taking the pawn is critical, even though it allows a knight fork. Alternatives:

a) 19 ♖d6 ♖d8 (Black should consider 19...f5!? or 19...♖b7!?) 20 ♖xc5 ♗d3 21 ♖a5 ♗xe1 22 ♖xe1 and with two pawns for the exchange, White had some advantage in J.Hudecek-C.Ponizil, Czech League 2008.

b) 19 ♖d1 ♖d8 20 ♖c2 ♗d3 21 ♖ed1 ♕xa1 22 ♖xd3 (if 22 ♖xa1 f5!) 22...♖xd3 23 ♖xd3 ♖d8 24 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 25 ♕xc5 occurred in a game between two future

stars in S.Mamedyarov-Z.Efimenko, Oropesa del Mar 2000. Here the simple 25...♖d2 would leave White struggling.

19...♖d3 20 ♖d6

Worse is 20 ♖a5?! ♖e5 (also worth considering are 20...♗xa1 and 20...♗xe4) 21 ♖b6 ♖b8 22 ♖a7 ♖xe1 23 ♖xe1 ♖a5! 24 ♗f4 ♖b7 25 ♖e3 ♖d8 and Black had counterplay in V.Zhidkov-V.Zakharov, Tula 2000.

20...♖xe1

This is much better than 20...♗xa1? 21 ♖xa1 ♖e5 22 ♖f4 with an overwhelming position.

21 ♖xe1 ♖b7

White also has good compensation for the exchange after 21...♗xe4 22 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 23 ♖xb4.

22 ♖f4 ♖ad8 23 ♖c5 ♗xe4 24 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 25 ♖d5

White's strong knight and pressure on the b4-pawn gave him good compensation in P.Skatchkov-A.Fedorov, Krasnodar 1998. However, Black has many places to deviate, beginning on move 11 and ending with Bologan's 16...bxc4.

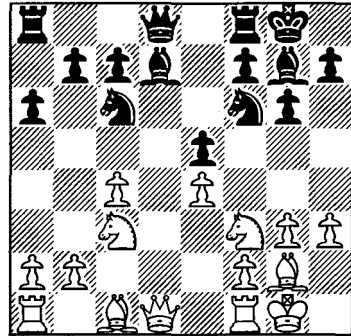
B3) 10 dxe5

This simple exchange turns out to be critical.

10...dxe5

Black has also tried recapturing with 10...♖xe5, but I have concerns with Black's position after 11 c5! (exchanging knights with 11 ♖xe5 dxe5 12 ♗e3 ♗e6 is not so dangerous) 11...♖xf3+ 12 ♖xf3 dxc5 13 e5 ♗c6 (Black was busted after

13...♖e8 14 ♖d1 ♖c8 15 ♖xb7 in M.Carlsen-K.Lahno, Lausanne 2004) 14 exf6! (this is much more dangerous than 14 ♖d1 ♖d7 15 ♗xc6 bxc6 16 f4 ♖e7 17 ♖e4 f6 18 ♖b3+ ♗h8 when Black has no problems as indicated by Bologan) 14...♗xf3 15 fxg7 ♖e8 16 ♗xf3. With three minor pieces for the queen White has good chances to develop an initiative: for example, 16...c6 17 ♖e4 ♗xg7 18 ♖d1 ♖xd1+ (this is hardly ideal, but alternatives do not inspire much confidence either) 19 ♗xd1 ♖xe4 20 ♗e3 ♖d8 21 ♖c1 b6 22 ♗f3 ♖e6 23 ♖c3! and White had serious pressure in U.Schulze-J.Hirneise, Bad Liebenzell 2010.



Generally this type of structure is quite acceptable for Black. Here the moves ...a6 and ...♗d7 are not ideal, however, and Black must spend some time reorganizing his pieces. Here White has a choice:

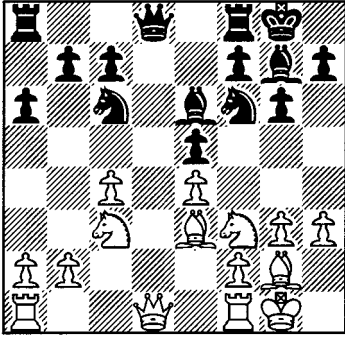
B31: 11 ♗e3

B32: 11 ♖e1

B31) 11 ♙e3

The most natural and common move, but perhaps not the best.

11...♙e6



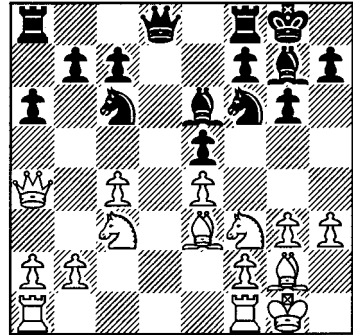
12 ♜a4

This is the most active move, but it meets with a surprising retort. Instead 12 b3 is very solid when Black has:

a) Trading queens does not seem to fully equalize: 12...♜xd1 13 ♜axd1 (or 13 ♜fxd1, but I suspect removing the rook from the long diagonal is stronger) 13...♜ad8 14 ♖d5! ♜xe4 15 ♖xc7 ♜xd1 16 ♜xd1 ♖c3 17 ♜d2 ♙f5 18 ♖d5 e4 19 ♖g5 h6 20 g4 hxg5 21 gxf5 gxf5 22 ♙xg5 ♖xd5 23 ♜xd5 and White maintained an edge in V.Cmilyte-M.Ohme, German League 2009.

b) Following 12...h6 13 ♜c1 ♖h7 (13...♜c8 14 ♖h2 g5?! proved to be too loosening in P.Nikolic-V.Bologan, Selfoss 2003) 14 ♜d1 ♜c8 15 ♖h2 ♜d8 Bologan feels as though Black has equalized, but after 16 ♜b2 ♜xd1 17 ♜xd1 White's position still seemed slightly the more pleasant in P.Tregubov-B.Socko, Internet (blitz) 2004.

c) 12...♜c8 13 ♖h2 ♜d8 14 ♜c1 a5!? (this looks funny at first, but it is reasonable) 15 ♖g5 ♖d4 16 f4 and here instead of 16...♖h5?! 17 ♙xd4 ♜xd4? 18 f5 with a big advantage for White in V.Cmilyte-K.Arakhamia Grant, 5t Petersburg 2009, Black should prefer 16...exf4! 17 gx4 ♖h5 with the idea 18 f5?! ♙e5+ 19 ♖g1 gxf5.



12...b5!

This unexpected shot solves all of Black's problems. Other moves allow White to fight for an advantage:

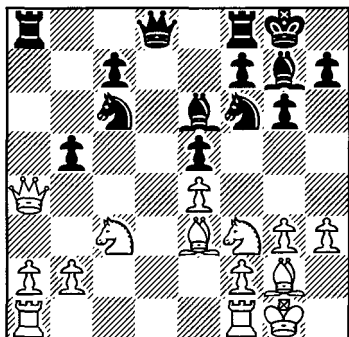
a) 12...♜d3? looks active, but Black traps his own queen: 13 ♖d5 b5 (there is nothing else) 14 ♜d1! bxc4 (14...♜xd1 15 ♜fxd1 ♜fc8 16 ♜ac1 is also much better for White) 15 ♖xc7 ♜ac8 16 ♖xe6 fxe6 17 ♜a4 and White had a big plus in V.Tukmakov-I.Smirin, Pula 2001.

b) 12...♜c8 is a better try, but White can maintain some pressure after 13 ♖h2 and here:

b1) 13...♜d8 14 ♜fd1 ♜xd1 15 ♜xd1 h6 16 c5 ♜f8 17 ♖d5 gave White the initiative in D.Bocharov-V.Bologan, Moscow 2004.

b2) 13...♖e8 14 ♜fd1 h6 15 c5 ♜d8 (playing ...♖e8 and then ...♜d8 makes an odd impression) was S.Mamedyarov-V.Bologan, Sochi 2006. Here White should probably just play 16 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 17 ♜d1 ♜f8 18 ♘d5 leading back to variation 'b1', but with both sides having saved a tempo.

13 cxb5 axb5



14 ♜c2

White can also take the pawn, but Black is quick to seize the initiative: 14 ♜xb5 ♘d4 15 ♜xe5 (after 15 ♜b7 ♜b8 16 ♜a7 ♜a8 forces a repetition, because 17 ♜c5? ♘d7 18 ♜b4 ♘xf3+ 19 ♙xf3 ♜f6! with the idea of ...♜fb8 is winning for Black) 15...♘xf3+ (Black can also try 15...♘d5, although after 16 ♜xg7+ ♘xg7 17 ♙xd4+ ♘f6 18 ♜fd1 White had a strong initiative for the sacrificed material in S.Shaw-K.Haznedaroglu, correspondence 2007) 16 ♙xf3 ♘d5 17 ♜g5 ♙f6 18 exd5?! (here the queen sacrifice does not even give White the initiative; it was better to acquiesce to a repetition after 18 ♜h6 ♙g7 19 ♜g5) 18...♙xg5 19 dxe6 ♙xe3 20 ♙xa8 ♜xa8 21 fxe3 fxe6

22 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 and Black was certainly better in V.Tukmakov-J.Zawadzka, Lausanne 2005.

14...♘d4 15 ♙xd4 exd4 16 ♜fd1

Grabbing the second pawn gives Black a powerful initiative after 16 ♘xb5 d3! 17 ♜c6 (or 17 ♜xc7?! ♘xe4) 17...♘d7 18 ♜c4 ♙xb5 19 ♜xb5 ♘xe4.

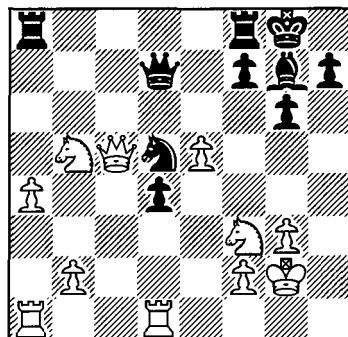
16...c5 17 ♘xb5 ♜d7

Black attacks the b5-knight and the h3-pawn. It was also possible to cover the c5-pawn with 17...♜a5!? or 17...♘d7!? when Black's active position and bishop-pair give him good play for the pawn.

18 a4 ♙xh3 19 e5

If 19 ♜xc5 ♘xe4 gives Black good play.

19...♙xg2 20 ♘xg2 ♘d5 21 ♜xc5



White has just about consolidated his position, but Black has a resource:

21...♘f4+! 22 gxf4 ♜g4+ 23 ♚f1 ♜xf3 24 ♜xd4 ♜ad8 25 ♘d6

The game is immediately drawn after 25 ♜xd8 ♜h1+ 26 ♚e2 ♜e4+ as White cannot go to the d-file.

25...♜xd6! 26 ♜xd6 ♜h1+ 27 ♚e2 ♜e4+

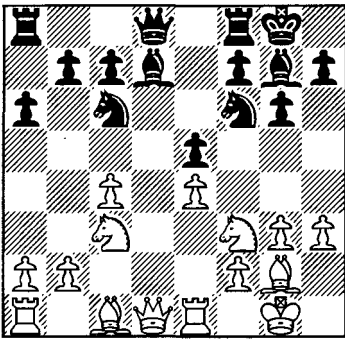
28 ♖f1

White accepts the draw. Instead 28 ♖d2 ♜xf4+ with the idea of ...♙xe5 gives Black fantastic play for the exchange.

28... ♜h1+ 29 ♖e2 ♜e4+ 30 ♖f1

1/2-1/2 A.Yusupov-B.Socko, German League 2007.

B32) 11 ♖e1



This move looks pretty harmless, but matters are not as simple as they first appear. White is in no hurry to determine the best square for his queen bishop, so he makes a useful move and prepares a quick ♘d5 by covering the e4-pawn.

11...h6

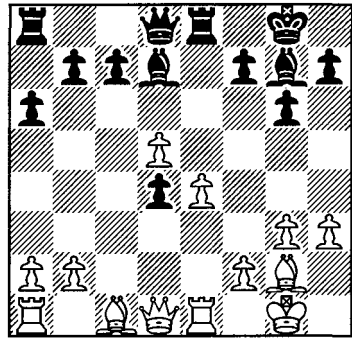
This is a very common move in the 10 dxe5 line. Black prevents White from using the g5-square and he also prepares the manoeuvre ...♘h7-g5 to fight for the d4-square. Still, it is not so easy to execute this plan effectively and Black should consider the alternatives as well:

a) 11... ♜c8 12 ♖h2 ♙e6 13 ♘d5 ♜e8

14 b4 is pleasant for White, and after the overly-active 14...b5?! 15 ♙g5 ♘d7 16 ♜c1 White was much better in B.Lalic-Z.Efimenko, Hastings 2003/04.

b) 11...♙e6 is natural. 12 ♘d5 ♘d7 13 ♙g5 (this is probably a little better than the similar 13 ♙e3 ♘a5 14 ♜c1 c5) 13...f6 14 ♙e3 ♘a5!? 15 ♜c1 c5 16 a3 ♘c6 17 b4 b6 was very solid for Black in both M.Grabarczyk-B.Socko, Warsaw 2003, and M.Grabarczyk-B.Socko, Lublin 2008, but White should have a small edge here.

c) 11...♜e8 is worth considering: 12 ♘d5 ♘xd5 13 cxd5 (or 13 exd5 ♘d4) 13...♘d4 (after 13...♘a7!? 14 ♙g5 ♜c8 15 ♜c1 ♘b5 16 ♖h2 h6 17 ♙e3 ♜d8 18 a4 ♘d6 19 ♘d2 White kept a small edge in R.Dableo-Zhou Weiqi, Olongapo City 2010, but both 14...f6 and 14...♙f6 could be considered) 14 ♘d4 exd4.

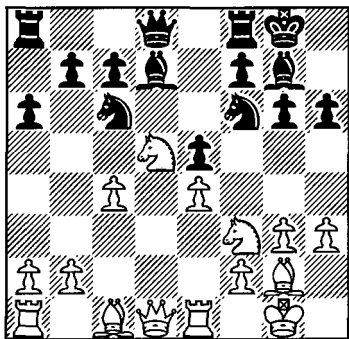


Now:

c1) 15 ♙f4 c6?! 16 ♜b3 ♙g5 17 ♙d2 ♜b8 18 ♜ac1 was better for White in T.Turgut-H.Tiemann, correspondence 2007, but 15...c5!? with unclear play looks more ambitious and preferable.

c2) 15 f4 c6 16 e5 ♖b6 (White was better after 16...cxd5 17 ♖xd4 in Z.Ilincic-N.Djukic, Herceg Novi 2001), and now 17 d6?! f6 is bad for White, while 17 ♖e4 f6 18 e6? (a better try is 18 ♖xd4 ♖xd4+ 19 ♖xd4 fxe5, but Black has decent play here too) 18...cxd5 also favours Black. Instead 17 b3 cxd5 18 ♖h2 was seen in P.Jaracz-C.Hanley, Cappelle la Grande 2004. Here 18...♗f5 19 ♗xd5 ♖ed8 would give Black good counterplay.

12 ♖d5



12...♖h7

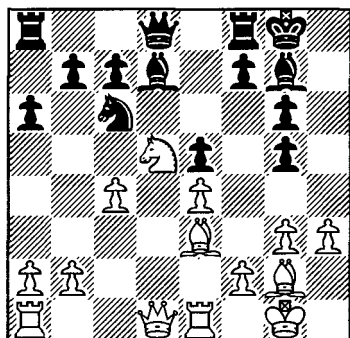
Black continues with his plan. Instead 12...♗e6 13 b4 ♖h7 (13...♖d7 14 ♗b2 also favoured White in I.Efimov-B.Socko, Saint-Vincent 2001, and here 14 ♗e3!? looks good too) 14 ♗e3 (now 14 ♗b2 ♖g5 would be effective) and here:

a) 14...f5 is loosening: 15 exf5 gxf5 16 ♗f4!? led to complications in E.Pigusov-A.Fedorov, Dubai 2001, but instead the simple 16 ♖b1 looks pleasant for White.

b) 14...♖g5 is consistent. Then 15 ♖xg5 hxg5 16 ♖d2 g4 17 hxg4 ♗xg4 18

♗g5! is similar to the main line.

13 ♗e3 ♖g5 14 ♖xg5 hxg5



15 ♖d2

The alternative 15 ♖b3 ♖b8 16 ♖ad1 ♖d4 17 ♗xd4 exd4 18 e5 c6 can lead to complex play, but Black can hold his own here:

a) 19 ♖f6+ ♗xf6 20 exf6 (the clever 20 ♖xd4!? can be met with the equally clever 20...♖e8 21 ♖ed1 ♗xe5 22 ♖xd7 ♖e1+! 23 ♖h2 ♖xd1 when the position is level) 20...♖xf6 21 ♖b6 ♖fe8 was fine for Black in V.Bologan-T.Radjabov, Pamplona 2001.

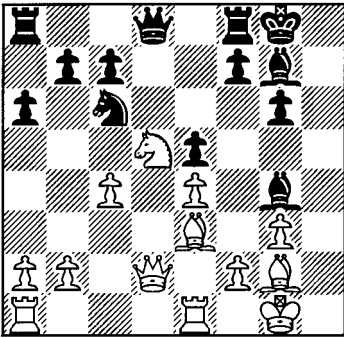
b) 19 ♖b6 ♗e6 20 ♖b4 ♖c7 (or just 20...♖e8) 21 ♖c5 ♖fd8 22 ♖d5!? (this seems very strong at first, but if Black can work his way through the complications he gets satisfactory play) 22...♗xd5 23 cxd5 ♗xe5 24 dxc6 ♗f6 25 ♖c1 (after 25 ♖a7 d3 26 cxb7 ♗d4 27 ♖xa6, as in Z.Ilincic-S.Dujkovic, Belgrade 2002, Black must play 27...♖c2!) 25...bxc6 26 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 27 ♖xc6 ♖g7 28 b3 a5 with equality in A.Kizov-S.Dujkovic, Zlatibor 2007.

15...g4 16 hxg4

This is better than 16 h4 ♖d4 17

♙xd4 exd4 18 e5 c6 19 ♘f4 ♖e8 20 ♘d3 (20 ♖xd4 ♙f5 21 ♖c5 ♗e7 is no problem for Black) 20...♗c7 21 ♗g5 ♙f5 22 ♙e4 f6 23 exf6 ♙xe4 24 ♘f4 (or 24 ♘c5 ♙f5 25 fxg7 ♖xg7) 24...♖e5?! (this lets White off too easily; Black could have tried 24...♗e5!? 25 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 26 fxg7 ♖ae8 with the better ending) 25 ♖xg4 ♙f5 26 ♗g5 ♙e4 with a draw in A.Flumbort-R.Van Kampen, Haarlem 2010.

16...♙xg4



Black looks fine here at first, but White's next move is rather inconvenient.

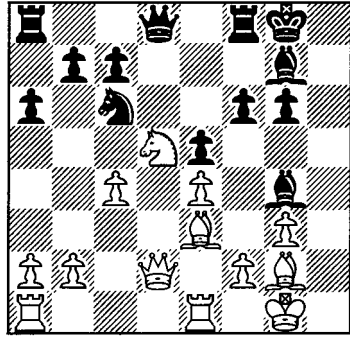
17 ♙g5!

This forces Black's reply and thus weakens Black's hold on the d4-square. Instead after 17 f3 ♙e6 18 ♘f2?! (similar is 18 ♙c5 ♖e8 19 ♘f2?! ♘d4, I.Cosma-D.Popovic, Subotica 2002) 18...♘d4 19 ♖ac1 c6 Black had achieved his aims in R.Vaganian-A.Zhigalko, Izmir 2004.

17...f6

Black would rather not play this, but 17...♗d6 18 ♘f6+ is even worse.

18 ♙e3



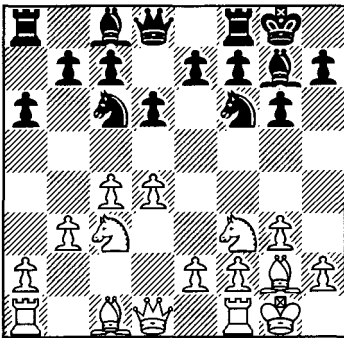
At the cost of a couple of tempi White has weakened Black's hold on the centre. Now White's space advantage allows him to keep some initiative. If Black tries to mix it up with 18...♘d4 19 ♙xd4 exd4 20 ♖xd4 c6, White has 21 e5! f5 22 f3 ♙h5 23 ♖ad1! g5 (or 23...cxd5 24 g4) 24 ♘f6+ ♙xf6 25 ♖c3 ♙xe5 26 ♖xe5 and he keeps the initiative. Instead Black tried 18...♖f7 in M.Grabarczyk-B.Socko, Warsaw 2003, but after 19 f3 ♙e6 20 ♖ad1 ♙f8 21 ♖c2 ♗e8 (or 21...♘d4 22 ♙xd4 exd4 23 ♖d3 c5 24 f4 with the initiative) 22 c5 ♘a7 23 ♙f1 c6 24 ♘b6 ♖d8 25 a4 (Stohl suggests 25 ♙c4, while the simple 25 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 26 ♖d1 also looks better for White) 25...♘c8 26 ♘c4 ♖fd7 27 ♘a5 White had the initiative.

Chapter 4

Panno Variation

7 Nc3 a6 8 b3

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nf3 Bg7 4 g3 0-0 5
 Bg2 d6 6 0-0 Nc6 7 Nc3 a6 8 b3



This simple move has always been popular. White avoids the complications of the last two chapters and prepares to fianchetto his queen bishop.

8... a6

After this move White has an interesting choice. He can firm up the d4-pawn or simply continue developing, but in fact White's most popular response is to make a surprising hop into the centre.

A: 9 e3

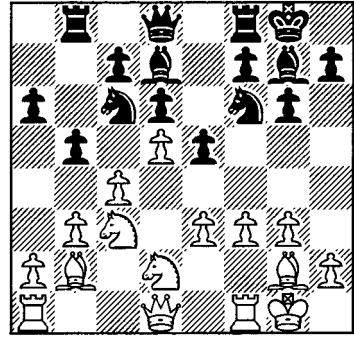
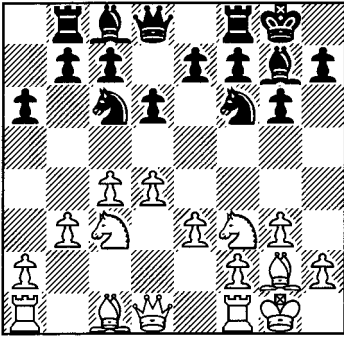
B: 9 Bb2

C: 9 Nd5

White can also play 9 d5. After 9... a5 we have transposed to note 'b2' to White's 9th move at the start of Chapter 1. Instead 9 a4 seems too committal. After 9...a5 (both 9...e5 and 9... a5 look quite playable too) 10 Bb2 Bg4 (and here 10... f5 and 10...e5 are valid alternatives) 11 h3 Bxf3 12 Bxf3 Nd7 with the idea of ...e5 Black has satisfactory play.

A) 9 e3

This move is fairly popular, but it makes a strange impression. Essentially, White is anticipating ...b5 and wants to protect the c4-pawn with his queen. Although 9 e3 has scored pretty well for White, I do not think Black should experience any particular problems.



9...b5 10 ♖e2

The alternative 10 ♖d2 should be met with the disruptive 10...♔g4! when White has:

a) 11 ♖e2 is awkward: 11...♗a5 (other moves such as 11...♗d7 are also quite feasible) 12 h3 ♔d7 13 ♗c2 c5 14 dxc5 dxc5 15 ♔a3 bxc4 16 bxc4 ♗c8 17 ♖h2 ♔c6 was fine for Black in S.Slipak-V.Milov, Buenos Aires 1996.

b) 11 ♔f3 ♔xf3 (this equalizes without difficulty, but leaving the bishop on f3 with 11...♔d7 12 ♔b2 e5 13 d5 ♖e7 14 ♗c1 h5!? 15 cxb5 axb5 16 b4 h4 also provided Black with counterplay in S.Danailov-M.Hebden, Toulouse 1990) 12 ♗xf3 ♗d7 and Black has no problems at all.

c) 11 f3 gains time at least, but White's structure looks a little funny after 11...♔d7 12 ♔b2 (Black had a fine position after 12 ♗e2 ♖a5 13 ♔b2 e5 14 dxe5 dxe5 15 cxb5 axb5 16 b4 ♖b7 17 ♖de4 ♖xe4 18 ♖xe4 f5 19 ♖f2 ♖d6 in A.Karpov-B.Gelfand, Tilburg 1996) 12...e5 13 d5 and here we have the following split:

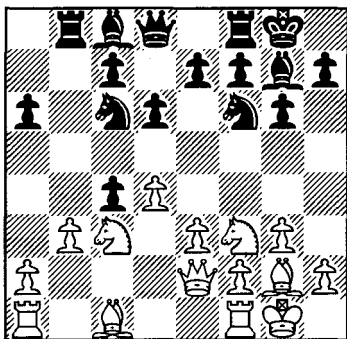
c1) 13...♖e7 14 e4 c6 (or 14...b4!?) 15 ♗b1 ♔h6 16 ♗e2 cxd5 17 cxd5 ♗b6+ 18 ♖h1 ♖h5 with counterplay in R.Schoene-A.Kuzmin, Berlin 1991.

c2) 13...♖b4 14 ♗b1 (White should avoid 14 a3?! ♖d3, while after 14 ♗e2 bxc4 he loses material: 15 ♗xc4 runs into 15...♖c2 and both 15 ♖xc4 and 15 bxc4 are met by 15...♖bxd5) 14...c6 15 a3 ♖d3 16 ♔a1 cxd5 17 cxd5 ♗b6 18 ♗e2 ♖c5 19 ♖h1 a5 (this is fine, but both 19...♗fc8 and 19...b4 look even better) 20 b4 axb4 21 axb4 ♖a4 and Black had a good game in R.Tsorbatzoglou-A.Cela, Kavala 1997.

10...bxc4

Black resolves the tension immediately for tactical reasons. Worse is 10...♖a5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 b4 ♖c6 (or 12...♖c4 13 a4!) 13 a3 when White has an edge. The alternative 10...b4 is playable, however. After 11 ♖d5 (11 ♖a4 gives Black a pleasant choice between Bologan's simple 11...e5 12 dxe5 dxe5 and the more complicated 11...♔d7 12 ♔b2 ♖a5) 11...♖h5!? (we will see this idea again) 12 ♔b2 e6 13 ♖f4 ♖xf4 14

exf4 ♖e7 15 ♜f1 ♗f5 16 d5 ♜e8 17 ♙xg7 ♜xg7 18 ♚d2 a draw was agreed in B.Lalic-A.Fedorov, Saint Vincent 2000. White's position looks a little more pleasant to me here, so I prefer the text, which is more direct and gives Black good play.



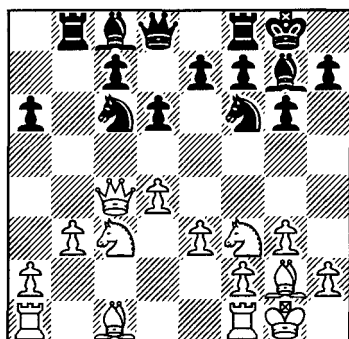
11 ♙xc4

After 11 bxc4 e5! White has:

a) 12 dxe5 ♗d7?! (this is risky) 13 ♗d4 ♗cxe5 14 f4 c5 15 fxe5 cxd4 16 exd4 dxe5 17 ♙a3 exd4?! 18 ♙xf8 ♜xf8? 19 ♜xf7! quickly decided matters in C.McNab-M.Hebden, Hastings 1993/94. Simpler was 12...♗g4! 13 ♗d4 ♗cxe5 with the idea of 14 h3 c5!.

b) 12 d5 e4!? (12...♗a5 13 e4 c5 and 1/2-1/2 in V.Tkachiev-R.Kasimdzhanov, New Delhi 2000, was not very revealing) 13 dxc6 exf3 (instead 13...♙g4 14 ♜b1! ♜e7 15 ♙d2 h5 16 ♜b7 ♜xb7 17 cxb7 c6 18 ♜b1 ♜b8 was C.McNab-M.Hebden, Dundee 1993, and here 19 ♗d4! ♙xe2 20 ♗xc6 ♜xb7 21 ♗xb8 ♜c7 22 ♗xe2 would give White too much material for the queen) 14 ♙xf3 ♗g4!? (this is fine, but Black could also consider 14...♙h3

15 ♜d1 ♗g4 16 ♙d2 ♗e5 or 14...♗e4 15 ♙xe4 ♙xc3 16 ♜b1 ♜xb1 17 ♙xb1 ♙h3 18 ♜d1 ♜e8 19 ♜f3 ♜e6; in both cases Black has good play for the pawn) 15 ♜b1 (White should consider the greedy 15 ♙d2 ♗e5 16 ♜ab1!?) 15...♜xb1 16 ♗xb1 ♗e5 17 ♙d5 ♜e8 18 c5 and a draw was agreed in an unclear position in O.Cvitan-M.Al Modiahki, Biel 2002.



11...♗b4!

This gives Black good piece play. The knight is a bit of a nuisance here and Black is ready to seize the initiative on the light squares.

12 a3

White immediately kicks the knight, because after 12 ♜e2 Black's bishop finds another route with 12...a5! 13 ♜d1 ♙a6. Following 14 ♜d2 c5! Black has good play: for example, 15 ♙a3 (if 15 a3 ♗d3, while after 15 dxc5 dxc5 Black has a lead in development and a clear initiative) 15...♜c7 (Black has also tried 15...♗d7, which looks a little passive, but 15...c4!? deserves attention), and now:

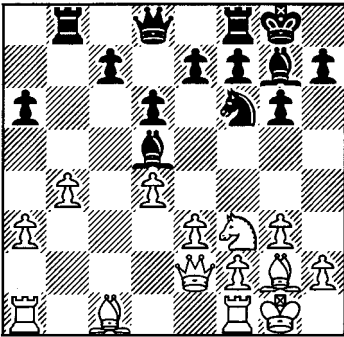
a) 16 ♗e1 cxd4 (Black could maintain the tension with 16...♜fc8 as well)

17 exd4 was V.Tkachiev-M.Paragua, Bastia (rapid) 2003. Now 17... $\text{f}c8$ 18 $\text{a}c1$ $\text{d}7$ would give Black a nice position.

b) 16 $\text{a}c1$ $\text{f}c8$ (16...c4!?) 17 dxc5 was D.Zoler-B.Socko, Biel 2007. Here 17...dxc5! with the idea of ... $\text{f}d8$ would give Black the initiative.

12... $\text{e}6$ 13 $\text{e}2$ $\text{b}d5$ 14 $\text{d}x5$ $\text{e}x5$ 15 b4

White tries to hold off Black's pawn breaks, but as we shall see this is not very successful. Instead 15 $\text{xa}6$ $\text{xb}3$ favours Black, so White should probably seek to equalize with 15 $\text{d}2$.



15...c5!

This is the most aggressive move, but there are a couple of viable alternatives:

a) 15... $\text{c}8$ 16 $\text{b}2$ $\text{b}7$ 17 $\text{a}b1$ $\text{f}c8$ 18 $\text{f}c1$ h5!? with a level position in G.Camacho-L.Martinez, Cardenas 2005.

b) 15...a5 and now:

b1) 16 $\text{d}2$ $\text{e}4$ 17 $\text{a}b1$ (17 bxa5?! $\text{b}2$) was D.Komljenovic-F.Nijboer, Metz 2001. Now 17...axb4 18 axb4 c6 19 $\text{f}c1$ $\text{d}7$ would give Black a very nice position.

b2) 16 bxa5 c5 17 $\text{d}2$ $\text{e}4$ 18 $\text{a}b1$ $\text{xb}1$ 19 $\text{xb}1$ $\text{d}x2$ (maintaining the tension with 19... $\text{a}8!$ looks even better) 20 $\text{xd}2$ $\text{a}8$ 21 $\text{e}1$ $\text{xg}2$ 22 $\text{d}xg2$ cxd4 23 exd4 $\text{e}4$ 24 $\text{e}1$ (24 $\text{b}4$ $\text{d}5$ 25 a6 is a better try) 24... $\text{xd}4$ 25 $\text{xd}4$ $\text{e}4$ 26 $\text{x}e7$ $\text{a}8$ with a level ending in M.Stangl-V.Baklan, Austrian League 2007.

16 bxc5

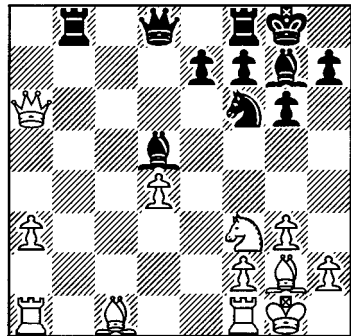
Instead 16 $\text{d}2$ c4 leaves Black with a strong passed pawn and good control of the centre. White fell apart quickly in the following game: 17 $\text{f}c1$ $\text{d}7$ 18 $\text{f}1$ $\text{b}7$ (18... $\text{f}c8!$?) 19 $\text{e}1$ e5 20 dxe5 $\text{e}4!$ 21 $\text{a}b1$ $\text{x}e5$ 22 $\text{c}2?$ $\text{e}c3!$ 23 $\text{x}c3$ $\text{d}xc3$ 0-1 R.Aulinger-K.Kachiani Gersinska, Fuerth 2001.

16...dxc5 17 $\text{xa}6$

White grabs material, as Black is doing well after 17 $\text{b}2$ $\text{e}4$.

17...cxd4 18 exd4

Black also has a powerful initiative after 18 $\text{d}x4$ $\text{xg}2$ 19 $\text{xg}2$ $\text{d}5+$ 20 f3 (or 20 $\text{g}1$ $\text{e}4!$) 20... $\text{f}c8$.



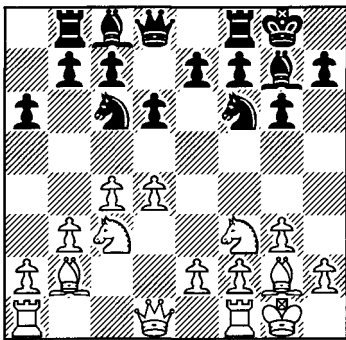
18... $\text{b}3!$ 19 $\text{e}3$ $\text{g}4$ 20 $\text{f}e1$ $\text{e}x3$ 21 $\text{x}e3$

Black has a similar trick after 21 fxe3 ♟xf3 22 ♟xf3 ♟xd4 23 exd4 ♞xf3 and here 21...♟h6!? 22 e4 ♟b7 23 ♞a4 ♞b6 is also very tempting.

21...♞xe3 22 fxe3 ♟xf3 23 ♟xf3 ♟xd4!

Black wins back the pawn and enjoys a nice advantage because of his better structure and safer king, A.Vul-K.Terrieux, Stockholm 2009.

B) 9 ♟b2



This is the most natural move.

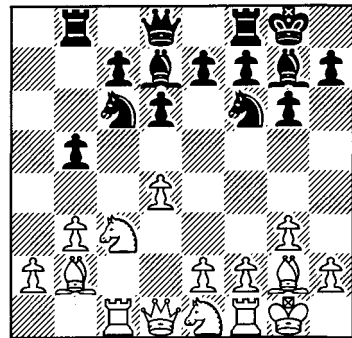
9...b5 10 cxb5

White makes this exchange to avoid problems on the b-file. Instead 10 ♘e1 ♟d7 11 cxb5 axb5 transposes to note 'a' to White's 11th move, below, while instead 10 d5 ♘a5 11 cxb5 is variation 'b' there.

10...axb5 11 ♞c1

White occupies the freshly opened c-file. This is the most logical move, but a couple of other ideas have been tried as well:

a) 11 ♘e1 (White gains a tempo by attacking the c6-knight) 11...♟d7 12 ♞c1 and now:



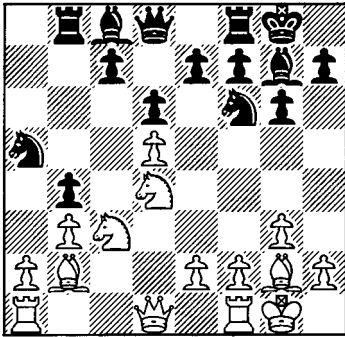
a1) 12...e6 is a typical, flexible move in the Panno: 13 e3 (13 ♘xb5 leads to a dull equality after 13...♞xb5 14 ♟xc6 ♟xc6 15 ♞xc6 ♞a8 16 ♞xc7 ♞xa2) 13...b4 14 ♘b1 ♞b6 15 ♘d3 ♞b8 16 ♞c2 ♞c8 17 ♞d2 ♘d5 was unclear in D.Poldauf-S.Atalik, Hastings 1995.

a2) 12...e5 13 ♘xb5 (after 13 ♟xc6 ♟xc6 14 dxe5 dxe5 15 ♞xd8 ♞fxd8 16 ♘d3 e4 17 ♘b4 ♟e8 Black's bishop-pair compensated for the weaknesses in his structure in Bu Xiangzhi-E.Inarkiev, Novgorod 2007) 13...♞xb5 14 ♟xc6 ♟xc6 15 ♞xc6 ♞a8 16 ♞c2 ♞xa2 (I prefer Mikhalevski's suggestion of 16...e4! when Black's queenside pressure combined with the poor position of White's knight gives Black good play for the pawn) 17 dxe5 dxe5 18 ♟xe5 ♞xb3 19 ♘d3 ♞e8 20 ♟xf6 ♟xf6 21 ♘c1 ♞e6 22 ♞xc7 ♞d8 23 ♞a4 ♞b2 and Black had enough activity to draw in P.Nikolic-F.Hellers, Wijk aan Zee 1986.

a3) 12...b4 13 ♘a4 (13 ♘b1 could be met by 13...♞b6, 13...♘a5 or 13...♘a7) 13...♘a5 (instead 13...♘a7?! does not mix with ...♟d7 and 14 ♘d3 gives White

an edge) 14 ♗d3 ♕xa4 (14...♖b5!? intending ...c6 and ...♗b8 is also possible) 15 bxa4 ♗d7 16 ♗d2 (16 e4 c6 17 ♖e1 ♗a7 18 ♗d2 b3! gave Black good play in I.Nemet-V.Bologan, Biel 1993) 16...♖fc8 (worse is 16...♗xa4 17 ♖xc7) is rather unclear. Bologan gives the possible line 17 ♗xb4 ♗xa4 18 ♕c3 c6 19 ♖b1 d5 20 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 21 ♕xa5 ♕xd4 22 e3 ♖a8 with equality.

b) 11 d5 ♗a5 12 ♗d4 b4 and now we have:

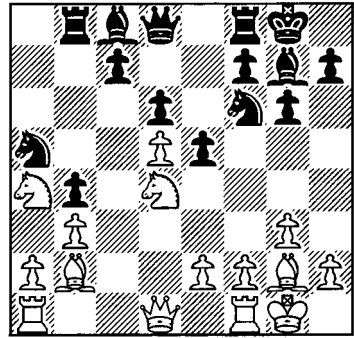


b1) 13 ♗b1?! is too passive: 13...♕b7 14 e4 (after 14 ♗c6 ♕xc6 15 dxc6 d5 the c6-pawn is weak) 14...c5 15 dxc6 ♗xc6 16 ♗xc6 ♕xc6 and Black is better developed. Note that 17 e5? fails to 17...♕xg2 18 exf6 ♕xf6 when Black wins material.

b2) 13 ♗cb5?! is tricky, but looks too risky for White: 13...♗xd5 (a good alternative is 13...e5! 14 dxe6 c5 15 ♗c6 ♗xc6 16 exf7+ ♖xf7 17 ♕xc6 ♗b6! when 18 ♗xd6 fails to 18...♕f8 and 18 ♗xd6 ♗xc6 19 ♗xf7 ♗xf7 favours Black) 14 ♕xd5 ♖xb5 15 ♗xb5 ♕xb2 16 ♖b1 ♕g7 gives Black a pawn and excellent play for the exchange. After 17 ♗d4 c5

18 ♗c2 ♕h3 19 ♕g2 ♕xg2 20 ♗xg2 ♗a8+ 21 ♗g1 ♗c6 Black had the upper hand in B.Istrate-L.Nisipeanu, Calarasi 1995.

b3) 13 ♗a4 e5! with a further branch:

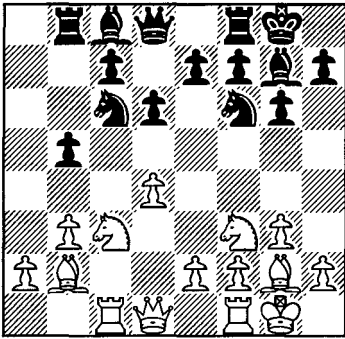


b31) 14 dxe6 fxe6 15 ♗c6 ♗xc6 16 ♕xc6 e5 17 ♗c2 and here both 17...♕h3 18 ♕g2 ♕xg2 19 ♗xg2 ♖f7 (M.Najdorf-J.Nunn, England 1983) and 17...♕e6 18 ♖ad1 ♗c8 19 ♕c1 ♗a6 20 ♕g2 ♖fc8 (S.Khamdamov-A.Fedorov, Dresden Olympiad 2008) are pleasant for Black.

b32) After 14 ♗c6 ♗xc6 15 dxc6 White's queenside demonstration has not troubled Black. The a4-knight is out of play and the c6-pawn is more of a weakness than a strength: 15...♖e8!? (15...♕a6) 16 ♖c1 h5!? 17 ♗d2 ♕a6 18 ♖fd1 h4 19 ♖c2 hxg3 20 hxg3 ♗c8 21 ♗g5 ♕b5 and Black was better in Nguyen Anh Dung-M.Al Modiahki, Subic Bay 2009.

b33) 14 ♗c2 ♕d7 15 ♗e1 (after 15 ♗e3 ♕h6 16 ♕c1 ♖b5 17 ♗d3 ♗a8 Black is better according to Bologan) 15...♕xa4 (15...c5!? is another idea) 16

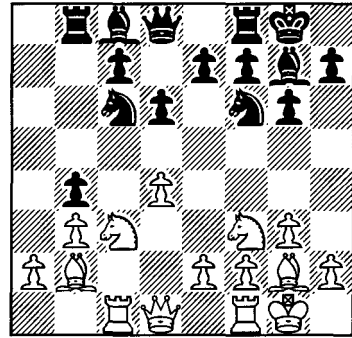
bxa4 ♖c4 17 ♜b1 ♗xb2 18 ♜xb2 e4 19
 ♜xb4 ♗xd5 20 ♜xe4 ♜b2 21 ♜c4 (Black
 had sufficient counterplay after 21 ♜d2
 ♗c3 22 ♜c4 ♗xa2 23 ♙c6 ♜b8 in
 V.Burmakin-A.Khalifman, Elista 1995)
 21...♗b6 22 ♜c6 ♗xa4 23 ♜a5 ♗c5 24
 ♜c1 was V.Burmakin-T.Balabaev, Par-
 dubice 2002. Here 24...♜g5! hitting the
 c1-rook looks strong: for example, 25 e3
 (or 25 f4 ♜f5 26 e4 ♜h5 transposing)
 25...♜f5! 26 e4 ♜g5! 27 f4 ♜h5 and
 White has serious problems.



11...b4

Black forces the pace, but 11...♙d7!?
 is a decent alternative: 12 d5 (12 ♗e1
 transposes to note 'a' to White's 11th
 move, above) 12...♗a5 13 ♗d4 b4
 (13...e5?! does not work out well after 14
 dxe6 fxe6 15 ♗cxb5! because 15...♙xb5
 fails to 16 ♗xe6 ♜d7 17 ♜xc7 ♜xe6 18
 ♙d5! and 15...♜xb5 16 ♗xb5 ♙xb5 17
 ♜d2 c6 18 ♙c3 ♗b7 19 a4 is much bet-
 ter for White) 14 ♗b1 (White should
 probably prefer 14 ♗a4 e5 15 dxe6 fxe6
 16 ♗c6 ♗xc6 17 ♙xc6 ♙xc6 18 ♜xc6
 ♜f7 19 ♜d3 with a fairly level position)
 14...e5 15 ♗c2 (15 dxe6 is safer, but

Black has good play after 15...fxe6)
 15...c5! 16 dxc6 ♙xc6 17 ♙xc6 ♗xc6 18
 ♗e3 ♜d7 is good for Black, as White is
 not well placed to contest the central
 squares.



12 ♗a4

The passive alternative 12 ♗b1 has
 been often played, but White has not
 scored well after 12...♗a7 (12...♗a5 is
 possible, as is 12...♙d7 when 13 ♗e1
 was seen in note 'a' to White's 11th
 move) and now:

a) 13 ♜c2 with a further divide:

a1) 13...c6 14 ♗bd2 ♙a6 15 ♗c4 ♗b5
 16 ♗e3 ♜c8 17 ♗e1?! ♗d5 18 ♜d2 ♗dc3
 was much better for Black in I.Almasi-
 I.Stohl, Hungarian League 2000.

a2) 13...♗b5 14 ♜c4 ♗d7 15 ♜xb4
 ♗xd4 16 ♜d2 ♗xf3+ 17 ♙xf3 ♙xb2 18
 ♜xb2 c5 19 ♜fd1 ♜a5 20 ♜d2 ♜xd2 21
 ♜xd2 ♙b7 22 ♙xb7 ♜xb7 was fine for
 Black in S.Provoost-F.Nijboer, Vlissingen
 2010.

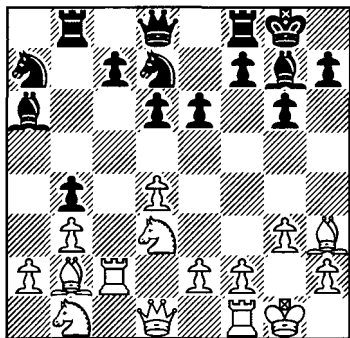
b) 13 ♗e1 ♗d7 (or 13...c6 14 ♗d3
 ♙a6 15 ♜c2 ♗d7) 14 ♗d3 ♙a6 and
 here:

b1) 15 d5!? ♙xd3 (simpler is

15... $\text{e}xb2$ 16 $\text{d}xb2$ e6 17 dxe6 fxe6 18 $\text{W}d4$ $\text{d}c8$ with approximate equality in O.Romanishin-V.Baklan, Groningen 2010) 16 $\text{e}xg7$ $\text{e}xe2$ 17 $\text{W}xe2$ $\text{e}xg7$ 18 $\text{W}d2$ $\text{e}b6$ (hanging on to the pawn is risky; Bologan prefers 18... $\text{d}f6$ 19 $\text{e}c4$ $\text{W}d7$ 20 $\text{e}xb4$ $\text{e}xb4$ 21 $\text{W}xb4$ c5 22 dxc6 $\text{d}xc6$ 23 $\text{W}d2$ $\text{e}c8$ with approximate equality) 19 $\text{e}c4$ $\text{W}b8$ 20 $\text{e}fc1$ $\text{e}c8$ 21 $\text{e}h4$ and with all Black's pieces jumbled up on the queenside, White had very real attacking chances in A.Kiss-E.Kislik, Szombathely 2008.

b2) 15 $\text{W}d2$ $\text{e}xd3$ 16 $\text{W}xd3$ c5 17 $\text{W}d2$ $\text{d}b5$ 18 dxc5 $\text{e}xb2$ 19 $\text{W}xb2$ $\text{d}xc5$ with counterplay in S.Arishin-N.Kabanov, Omsk 2001.

b3) After 15 $\text{e}h3$ e6 16 $\text{e}c2$ White's play looks a bit odd.



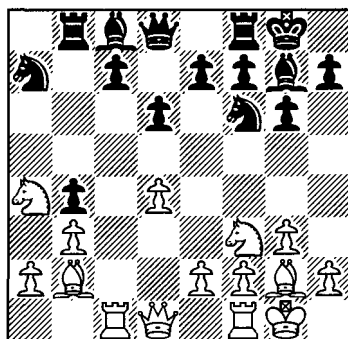
Here 16...c6 17 $\text{W}d2$ $\text{W}b6$ 18 $\text{d}f4$ $\text{d}f6$ 19 $\text{e}fc1$ $\text{e}fe8$ was unclear in C.Lutz-V.Bologan, German League 1994, but I would prefer 16...c5!? 17 dxc5 $\text{e}xd3$ 18 $\text{W}xd3$ $\text{e}xb2$ 19 $\text{e}xb2$ $\text{d}xc5$ when Black has an excellent position.

12... $\text{d}a7$

It is often a difficult decision where

to place the knight. From a5 the knight can contest the c4-square, while from a7 it can emerge on b5. If Black can then play ... $\text{d}d5$ White will have to worry about an invasion on c3. In general both knight moves can combine well with ... $\text{e}a6$, but if Black plays ... $\text{e}d7$ then it is usually worse to play ... $\text{d}a7$, as both of Black's queenside pieces will want to use the b5-square. If Black plays ... $\text{e}d7xa4$, the a7-knight remains out of play.

Here 12... $\text{d}a7$ has been played frequently, but 12... $\text{d}a5$ is possible as well. After 13 $\text{W}c2$ (13 d5 $\text{e}d7$ 14 $\text{d}d4$ was seen in the notes to Black's 11th move, above, while 13 $\text{d}e1$ $\text{e}d7$ is note 'a3' to White's 11th) 13...c6 14 $\text{d}e1$ $\text{e}a6$ 15 $\text{d}d3$ $\text{W}d7$ (15... $\text{e}b5$!?) 16 $\text{W}d2$ $\text{W}b7$ 17 $\text{e}c2$ $\text{d}d5$ 18 $\text{e}fc1$ $\text{e}fd8$ 19 h4 e6 20 e4 $\text{d}e7$ 21 $\text{e}f1$ $\text{e}xd3$ with a draw was the not very revealing V.Papin-E.Inarkiev, Dagomys 2010.



13 $\text{W}c2$

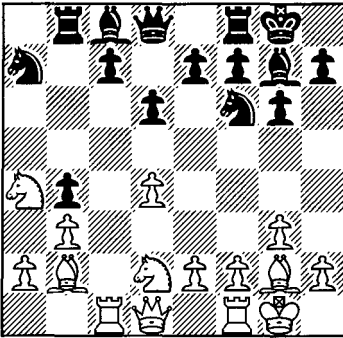
White has several alternatives:

a) 13 d5 e5 (or 13...e6 14 e4 e5!?) 15 $\text{W}c2$ $\text{d}b5$ 16 $\text{d}e1$ $\text{e}h6$, as in H.Teske-

A.Sebbar, Marrakesh 2010) 14 dxe6 fxe6 15 ♖c2 c5?! (better is 15...♗b5 with the idea of 16 ♖c4 c5) 16 ♜fd1 ♖e7? 17 ♜xd6! was L.Aronian-H.Nakamura, Moscow (blitz) 2010. This is a trick to be aware of: 17...♗xd6 18 ♙e5 wins back the rook.

b) 13 ♗e1 ♙b7 14 ♖c2 ♙xg2 15 ♗xg2 does not look too dangerous. After 15...c6 16 e4 ♖a5 17 ♗e3 ♜fc8 18 f4 d5 19 e5 ♗e4 20 f5 e6 21 fxe6 fxe6 22 ♗g4 ♜f8 Black was fine in P.Nikolic-A.Shirov, Monte Carlo (rapid) 1999.

c) It is logical to head for c4 with 13 ♗d2!? against ...♗a7 ideas because Black will have trouble challenging the knight:



13...♙d7 (this looks suspicious; Black should consider 13...♙b7 14 e4 e6 with a flexible position) 14 ♗c4 ♙b5 (White keeps an edge after 14...♙xa4 15 bxa4 ♗d7 16 ♖c2 c5 17 ♜fd1 according to Bologan) 15 ♜e1 e6 16 e4 ♗c8 17 ♖d2 ♗xe4 18 ♙xe4 d5 and here instead of 19 ♙d3 dxc4 20 ♙xc4 ♙xa4 21 bxa4 c5 22 ♜ed1 ♗b6 23 ♙b5 cxd4 24 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 25 ♖xd4 ♗d5 with even chances in

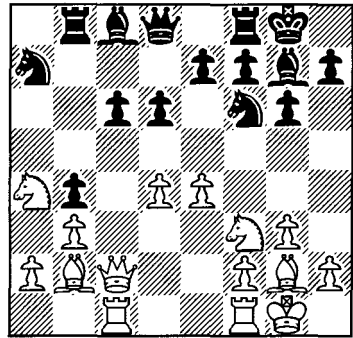
P.Nikolic-L.McShane, Istanbul 2003, Bologan suggests 19 ♗c5 dxe4 20 ♖xb4 ♗d6 21 ♗e5 with an edge for White.

13...c6

Not 13...♗b5 14 ♖c4, but now Black intends ...♖a5 and either ...♙a6 or ...♖h5 and ...♙h3.

14 e4

After 14 ♗e1 ♙a6 15 ♗d3 ♖a5 16 ♜fd1 ♜fc8 Black is ready to play ...♙b5 or ...♗d7.



The play is very flexible and Black has a several possibilities here:

a) 14...♙a6 15 ♜fe1 ♙b5 16 e5 ♗d5 17 h4 (White tries to create problems on the kingside) 17...♖a5 18 h5 ♙xa4 19 bxa4 was Y.Razuvaev-Z.Polgar, Dortmund 1985. Here Black should probably seek counterplay with 19...♗b6!?

b) 14...♙d7 15 ♜fe1 ♖a5 16 e5 ♗d5 17 ♗d2 ♗b5 18 ♗c4 ♖a7 with a typically unclear position was N.Straub-M.Szelag, Warsaw 2005.

c) 14...♙h6 15 ♜cd1 ♖a5 16 d5 ♙a6 17 ♜fe1 ♜fc8 18 ♖b1 cxd5 19 ♙xf6 exf6 20 ♜xd5 ♗b5 was fairly level in D.Poldauf-J.Nunn, Bundesliga 1998.

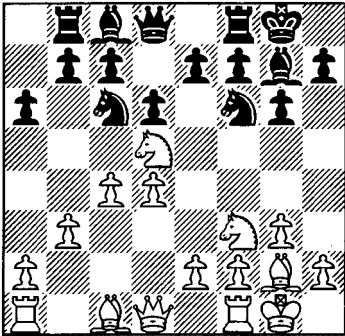
d) 14...♙a5 and here:

d1) After 15 h3 ♗a6 16 ♜fe1 ♗b5 Black is ready to create counterplay with ...♞d7, ...♗xa4 and ...♞b6.

d2) 15 e5 ♞d5 16 ♞d2 ♗f5 17 ♗e4 ♗xe4 18 ♙xe4 ♙a6 19 ♙h4 f5 20 exf6 ♗xf6 21 ♙e4 ♙c8 22 ♞c4 ♙f5 23 ♙g2?! was G.Bagaturov-D.Dochev, Glifada 2000. Here simply 23...♞b5 gives Black good play.

d3) 15 ♜fe1 ♙h5 16 e5 (instead 16 ♞d2 ♗h3 17 f3 ♜fc8 looks okay and 16 h4 ♙a5 17 ♞d2 ♗e6 18 ♙d3 ♙b5 also looked fine in O.Romanishin-J.Dworakowska, Gausdal 2006) 16...♞d5 17 ♞d2 ♗h3 18 ♗e4 f5!? 19 ♗f3 was S.Guliev-V.Bologan, Ostrava 1993. Here Bologan suggests 19...♗g4 with the idea of 20 ♗g2 f4! with attacking chances.

C) 9 ♞d5



This lunge has developed into White's most popular choice. It is not so easy to explain, however, as White violates classical principles. That said, White certainly avoids having his knight harassed by Black's b-pawn and by ex-

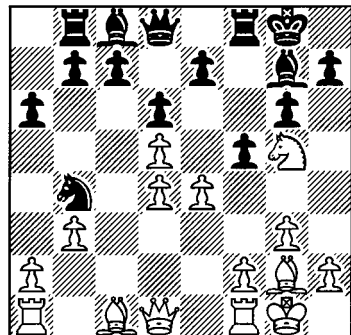
changing knights he hopes to limit Black's scope for counterplay.

9...♞h5!?

This equally extravagant reply is Black's main response. By moving the knight, Black hopes to gain time by playing ...e6. Black may also 'go Dutch' with ...f5 and several other moves have been tried in practice:

a) 9...b5 10 ♞xf6+ ♗xf6 (10...exf6 is probably better) 11 ♗h6 ♜e8 12 ♜c1 does not look so terrible, but Black has had a horrifyingly bad score in practice. White's play is very simple and Black has trouble being disruptive.

b) 9...♞xd5 is generally considered to be a mistake, but matters are not so clear after 10 cxd5 ♞b4 (Black must make sure that this knight does not become trapped) 11 e4 f5 12 ♞g5



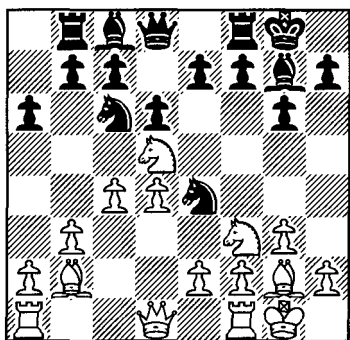
and now:

b1) 12...fxe4?! 13 ♗xe4 c6 14 ♞xh7! ♞xh7 15 ♙h5+ ♞g8 16 ♗xg6 ♜f6 17 ♙h7+ ♞f8 18 ♗h6 ♜xg6 19 ♙xg6 (19 ♙h8+ ♞f7 20 ♙xd8 ♜xh6 21 ♙b6 may be even stronger) 19...♗xh6 20 ♙xh6+ ♞e8 21 dxc6 bxc6 was O.Romanishin-

B.Kantsler, Tbilisi 1986. Here 22 ♖fe1 gives White a big advantage because 22...♗c2? loses to 23 ♖g6+.

b2) 12...c5 is not so clear: 13 dxc6 (Black has counterplay after 13 e5!? dxe5 14 dxe5 ♗xe5 15 ♖b1 f4! with the idea 16 a3 ♗a2 17 ♖e2 ♖f5!, while 13 ♗b2 h6 14 ♗e6 ♗xe6 15 dxe6 cxd4 16 exf5 gxf5 17 a3 ♗c6 18 ♖c1 ♖b6 was unclear in A.Groenn-P.Haugli, Oslo 2011) 13...♗xc6 14 exf5 was A.Rustemov-V.Loginov, Elista 2001. Here Black should play 14...♗xf5 with the idea 15 ♗d5+ ♗h8 16 ♗f7+?! ♖xf7 17 ♗xf7 ♗xd4 with more than enough for the exchange.

c) 9...♗e4 is similar in nature to 9...♗h5. The knight may be more active on e4, but it is also more exposed. Black aims for a quick ...f5 with a kind of Leningrad Dutch. After 10 ♗b2 Black has tried:

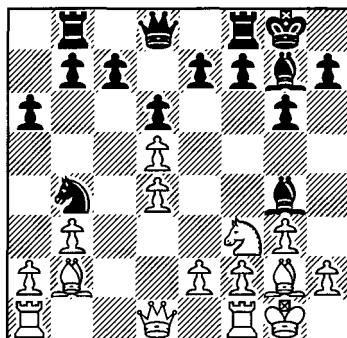


c1) 10...f5 11 e3 e6 12 ♗c3 ♗xc3 13 ♗xc3 ♖e7 14 b4 ♗d8 15 b5!? ♗f7 16 ♖b3 b6 17 ♗d2 ♗h8 18 f4 ♗b7 19 a4 ♗g2 20 ♗xg2 was A.Karpov-I.Sokolov, Dortmund 1999. White's space and

queenside play give him an edge.

c2) 10...e6 11 ♗f4 (this looks better than 11 ♗e3 f5 or 11 ♗c3 ♗xc3 12 ♗xc3 e5), and now Black should be careful: for example, 11...f5 12 e3 ♖e8 13 ♖c1 g5 14 ♗d3 ♗d8 15 ♗d2 ♗f6 16 f4 with a comfortable plus for White in O.Cvitan-A.Habibi, Lugano 1999.

d) 9...♗g4!? is a healthy, active move which deserves serious attention. After 10 ♗b2 (if 10 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 11 ♗h6 Black can play 11...♗xf3 12 exf3 ♗xd4 13 ♗xf8 ♗xa1 14 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 15 ♖xa1 ♖e8 with equality or 11...♖e8 with the idea of ...♗xf3 or ...e5) 10...♗xd5 11 cxd5 ♗b4 Black has some pressure against the d5-pawn, but he must make sure his knight does not get trapped.



White has:

d1) 12 ♗e1 c6 13 dxc6 ♗xc6 is level.

d2) 12 h3 ♗d7 13 e4 (13 ♗e1 c6) 13...f5 14 ♗g5 fxe4 15 ♗xe4 c6 was okay for Black in O.Romanishin-B.Socko, Athens 2005, as 16 ♗xh7?! does not really work after 16...♗xh7 17 ♖h5+ ♗g8 18 ♗xg6 ♖f6.

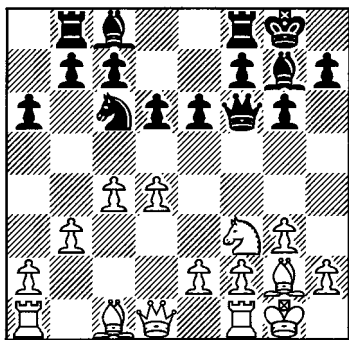
d3) 12 e4 f5! 13 h3 fxe4 14 hxg4 exf3

15 ♙xf3 ♚e8! 16 g5 (16 a3 ♚f7! hits both f3 and d5) and now:

d31) 16...♚xf3!? may be playable, but Black is really just trying to sit and hold a draw: 17 ♚xf3 ♚f7 18 ♙e2 ♚f8 19 f4 ♖xd5 (a better try was 19...h6 because after 20 ♚f2?! hxg5 21 fxg5 ♚xf2+ 22 ♚xf2 ♚xf2 23 ♖xf2 ♖xd5 Black should hold comfortably) 20 ♚f2 h6 21 ♚af1 and White was better in Wang Hao-A.Grischuk, Wijk aan Zee 2011.

d32) 16...♚f7 17 ♙g4 and now instead of 17...♚xd5? 18 ♚e1! ♚b5 19 a4! ♚b6 20 a5 ♚b5 21 ♙e2! 1-0 T.Petrik-V.Talla, Brezova 2009, Black could go 17...♖xd5 18 ♚e2 e5 19 f4 ♚be8 with unclear play.

e) 9...e6!? is natural. It is difficult to believe White can fight for an advantage after spending all these moves just to trade knights, but matters are not so simple after 10 ♖xf6+ ♚xf6 (instead 10...♙xf6 11 ♙h6 ♚e8 12 e3! e5 13 d5 e4 14 dxc6 exf3 15 ♙xf3 ♙xa1 16 ♚xa1 f6 was O.Romanishin-R.Gunawan, Sarajevo 1988, and 17 ♚d1!? gives White nice compensation for the exchange).



Here practice has seen:

e1) 11 ♙b2 ♚e7 (this is necessary, because 11...e5 12 d5 ♖d4? loses a pawn after 13 ♖xd4 exd4 14 e3 and 12...♖d8 13 c5! ♚e7 14 cxd6 cxd6 15 ♖d2 f5 16 ♖c4 ♖f7 17 ♚c1 favoured White in M.Podgaets-A.Fedorov, Moscow 2002) 12 e4 e5 13 d5 ♖d8 and here:

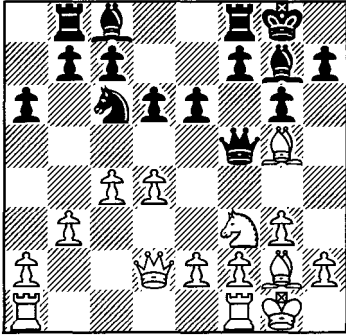
e11) 14 ♚d2 f5 15 exf5 and now instead of 15...♙xf5 16 ♖h4 ♙d7 17 f4 ♖f7 18 ♚ae1 with an edge for White in O.Romanishin-S.Atalik, Bled 2000, Black should play 15...gxf5! with the idea of ...f4 according to Atalik.

e12) 14 ♖e1 f5 15 ♖d3 fxe4 16 ♙xe4 ♖f7 17 ♙g2 ♙f5 18 ♚e1 ♚d7 19 f4 exf4 20 ♙xg7 ♖xg7 21 ♖xf4 ♖e5 was level in N.Gurieli-Wang Pin, Jakarta 1993.

e13) 14 ♖d2 f5 15 exf5 ♙xf5 (15...gxf5 16 f4 is White's idea) 16 ♖e4 ♖f7 (this is much better than the hasty 16...♙xe4 17 ♙xe4 ♖f7 18 h4! ♚d7 19 ♖g2 ♖h6 20 h5 ♖f5 21 hxg6 hxg6 22 ♚h1 with a clear advantage for White in M.Mchedlishvili-V.Milov, Batumi 2002) 17 ♚d2 (after 17 h4 g5 18 hxg5 ♖xg5 Black has counterplay according to Bologan) 17...♙h6!? (intending ...♖g5; instead Bologan gives 17...♙xe4 18 ♙xe4 ♖g5 19 ♚e2 ♖xe4 20 ♚xe4 ♚f5 21 f3 with just a slight edge to White) and now if 18 f4? ♙xe4 19 ♙xe4 exf4 20 ♚d4 fxg3! is possible, as all of the squares are covered and 21 hxg3 ♖e5 leaves Black with a healthy extra pawn.

e2) 11 ♙g5 ♚f5 (the placement of Black's queen looks a bit precarious, but he is counting on ...♖xd4 tricks) 12 ♚d2

(White allows Black's little trick; instead 12 ♖e3 e5 13 ♖d2 ♖h5 gave Black counterplay on the kingside in J.Timman-A.Fedorov, Las Vegas 1999).

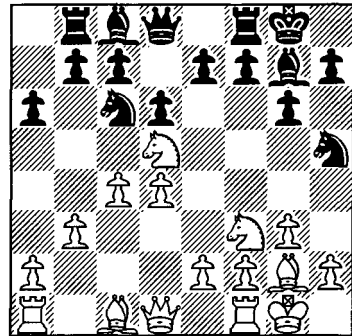


Here Black needs to decide whether or not he should execute his 'threat':

e21) 12...♗xd4 (well, this was Black's idea, but now he must walk a fine line in an attempt to hold the coming end-game) 13 ♗xd4 ♖xd4 14 ♖xd4 ♖xg5 15 ♖a7! ♖d7 16 ♖xb7 a5 (or 16...♖a5 and now instead of 17 ♖xa6 ♖xa6 18 ♖xa6 ♖b6 with a level ending, White should prefer 17 ♖f3 ♖b6 18 ♖xb6 ♖xb6 19 c5! which kept some pressure in G.Zaichik-J.Langreck, Philadelphia 2003) 17 ♖fd1 ♖fd8 18 ♖f3 ♖c5 19 ♖xc5 dxc5 20 ♖d3! (stronger than 20 ♖f1 ♖b6 21 ♖d2 ♖d6 22 ♖ad1 ♖e8 23 ♖e1 ♖f8 with a draw in P.Nielsen-A.Fedorov, Aars 1999) 20...♖f8 21 ♖ad1 ♖e7 22 ♖e3 a4? 23 ♖d5 and White won a pawn in Bu Xiangzhi-V.Bologan, Gibraltar 2008. Instead of 22...a4, Mikhalevski suggests 22...♖e8! 23 ♖d5 ♖xd5 24 cxd5 ♖d7 25 dxe6 ♖xe6 26 ♖d5 ♖b4 with the idea of ...c4 when Black manages to equalize.

e22) 12...e5 is much less common, but it looks quite playable: 13 d5 ♗d4 14 ♗xd4 (14 ♖e3 ♖c2! 15 ♗xd4 ♖xd2 16 ♖xd2 exd4 completely equalizes and after 17 ♖ac1 ♖e8 18 e3 ♖f5 19 ♖fe1?! dxe3 20 ♖xe3? ♖b2 Black won the exchange in C.Goldwasser-S.lermito, Villa Martelli 2008) 14...exd4 15 ♖h6 ♖xh6 16 ♖xh6 ♖e5 17 ♖d2 ♖g4 18 ♖fe1 ♖fe8 (perhaps 18...♖be8 is a subtle improvement, because 19 ♖f1 c5 20 dxc6 bxc6 21 ♖ad1 c5 22 h3 ♖c8! 23 e3 ♖g5 looks okay) 19 ♖f1?! (instead 19 ♖f1 intending 20 ♖ad1 would give Black some problems to solve: for example, 19...c5 20 dxc6 bxc6 21 ♖ad1 c5 22 h3 ♖f5 23 e3 and Black is under pressure) 19...♖h5 20 f3 was S.Slipak-S.lermito, Villa Martelli 2009. Now 20...♖d7 21 ♖g1 ♖e3 22 ♖xd4 ♖be8 would give Black ample compensation for the pawn.

Finally, we return to 9...♗h5:



10 ♖b2

Instead 10 e4 leads nowhere after 10...♖g4! (this is much better than 10...e6 11 ♗e3 or 10...b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♖b2 e6 13 ♗e3; in either case White has

an edge) 11 ♗b2 e5 12 h3 ♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 ♘f6 14 ♘xf6+ (or 14 dxe5 ♘xd5 15 cxd5 ♘xe5 with the idea 16 ♗g2 ♘f3+ 17 ♗xf3 ♗xb2) 14...♞xf6 15 d5 ♘d4 and Black had completely equalized in M.Pavlovic-F.Nijboer, Hilversum 2009.

10...e6 11 ♖c3

The knight simply retreats. White judges that if Black brings his knight back to f6, both sides will have lost two tempi and that Black has been enticed to play the useful but perhaps not optimal move ...e6. Other retreats may seem more purposeful, but they are not any better:

a) 11 ♘f4?! compromises White's pawn structure: 11...♘xf4 12 gxf4 b5 13 ♖c1 ♘e7 (flexible and good, but both 13...♗b7 and 13...bxc4 14 ♖xc4 ♘b4 could also be considered) 14 ♞d2 ♗b7 gives Black a healthy, dynamic position. Some examples:

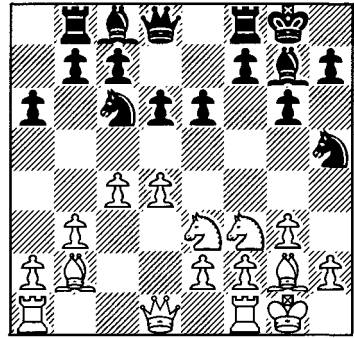
a1) 15 c5?! was played in M.Jirovsky-F.Jenni, Baden 1999. Here 15...♗e4! would give Black an excellent position.

a2) 15 ♗a3 ♖e8 16 ♖fd1 ♗e4 17 ♞e3 ♗xf3! 18 ♞xf3 ♘f5 19 e3 b4 (another idea is 19...c5!? with the idea of 20 dxc5 ♞a5) 20 ♗b2 c5 gave Black good play against White's pawn structure in N.Edzgeradze-M.Hebden, London 1999.

a3) 15 ♖fd1 bxc4 16 ♖xc4 ♘d5 17 ♖dc1 h6 18 e3 f5 19 ♘e1 g5 with good counterplay, G.Schwartzman-A.Istratescu, Bucharest 1994.

b) 11 ♘e3 is more important. On e3 the knight defends the c4-pawn, so Black's ...b5 advance loses some bite.

However, the knight may be awkwardly placed, as it blocks White's e-pawn and it could become a target for Black's advancing f-pawn. Black has:



b1) 11...b5 does not really improve Black's position. After 12 ♖c1 ♗d7 13 ♞d2 ♘e7 14 d5 e5 15 c5 White was certainly better in V.Burmakin-B.Vigh, Schwarzach 1999.

b2) 11...f5 weakens e6 a little early: 12 ♞d2! (instead 12 ♞c2 f4 13 ♘d1 e5 gives Black the initiative, while 12 ♞c1 ♘e7 13 ♖e1 b5 14 ♘f1 bxc4 15 ♞xc4 ♘d5 16 e4?! ♘df4! 17 gxf4 fxe4 18 ♘3d2 ♘xf4 19 ♘g3 was O.Romanishin-M.Pavlovic, Linares 1996, and here 19...d5! 20 ♞c2 ♘d3 gives Black a huge advantage after either 21 ♖f1 c5 or 21 ♗c3 ♖xf2) 12...♘e7 13 ♖ac1 b6 (13...♗h6!? 14 d5 e5 15 c5 e4 16 cxd6 cxd6 17 ♘e1 ♘f6 gave Black counterplay in Nguyen Ngoc Truong Son-N.Samakov, Guangzhou 2010, where Black managed to score a big upset) 14 c5! dxc5 (14...♗b7 15 ♘g5! illustrates one problem with a quick ...f5, but 14...♗h6 could be considered) 15 ♖fd1

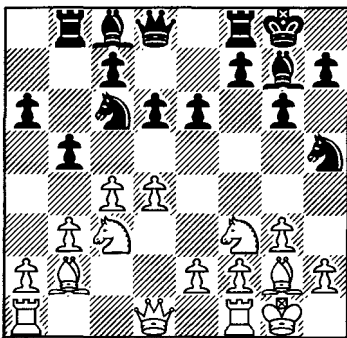
and White had excellent compensation for the pawn in V.Akopian-V.Bologan, Elista Olympiad 1998.

b3) 11...♗e7 looks best. White has:

b31) 12 ♖d2 b6 13 ♜ac1 ♟b7 14 ♜fd1 h6 15 c5 ♗f6 gives sufficient play. A nice example of Black's possibilities was 16 cxb6 cxb6 17 ♟a3 (activating with 17 ♗c4 was better) 17...b5! 18 ♖b4 ♗e8 19 ♗e1 a5 20 ♟b2 f5 and Black had an excellent position in I.Rausis-V.Bologan, Enghien les Bains 1999.

b32) 12 ♜c1 ♟d7 (Black can also play the more thematic 12...b6 13 ♖c2 ♟b7 14 ♜fd1 ♗f6 15 b4 ♟e4 16 ♖c3 as in P.Harikrishna-Z.Efimenko, Dubai 2004; now Stohl suggests 16...c6 with the idea of ...d5 or ...b5) 13 c5 ♟h6 14 cxd6 cxd6 15 ♜c2 ♟c6 16 ♗g4 ♟g7 17 ♗e1 ♟xg2 18 ♗xg2 f5 19 ♗4e3 d5 (19...f4!?) 20 ♟a3 ♜e8 21 ♗e1 ♗c6 22 ♗f3 ♗f6 (22...♜c8!? would prevent White's next move) 23 ♗e5 ♗xe5 24 dxe5 ♗d7 25 ♟d6 ♜c8 26 ♜xc8 ♖xc8 27 f4 was V.Akopian-A.Kuzmin, Dubai 1999, and here 27...♗c5 looks strong.

11...b5



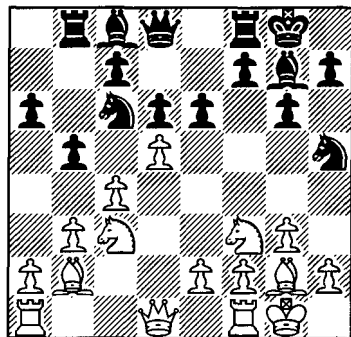
With the white knight back on c3, Black continues with his original plan.

12 d5

A different but familiar idea is 12 cxb5 axb5 13 ♜c1. After 13...b4 (or 13...♟d7 14 ♖d2 b4 15 ♗a4 ♗a5 16 ♖c2 as in Bu Xiangzhi-E.Inarkiev, Ningpo 2008; here Bologan suggest 16...♟c6!? 17 e4 ♗f6 18 ♜fe1 ♖d7 with a good position), and here:

a) 14 ♗b1 ♗a7 (one of several possibilities, such as 14...♗a5, 14...♟b7, 14...♟d7 or even 14...♜b6) 15 ♗e1 ♗b5 16 ♖d2 ♟b7 17 ♜c4 ♟xg2 18 ♗xg2 c5! 19 dxc5 dxc5 20 ♖xd8 ♜fxd8 21 ♟xg7 ♟xg7 22 ♜xc5 ♗d4 and Black had excellent compensation for the pawn in O.Romanishin-I.Smirin, Ischia 1996.

b) 14 ♗a4 ♟d7 (14...♗a5 15 ♖c2 ♟a6 16 ♜fe1 c6 17 e4 looked better for White in O.Romanishin-F.Nijboer, Essen 2001) 15 ♖c2 ♖e7 16 e3 ♜fc8 17 ♗e1 ♗a5 18 ♗d3 ♗f6 19 ♖d2 ♟xa4 20 bxa4 d5! 21 ♗c5 ♗c4 22 ♖e2 was V.Savon-Z.Lanka, Tmava 1989. Now 22...♗xb2 23 ♖xb2 ♗d7 is level according to Lanka.

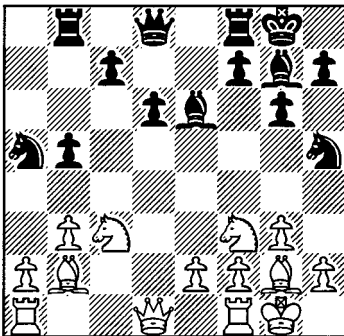


12...♗e7

Black chooses to make use of the move ...e6. He can also continue with the thematic 12... $\text{d}a5$. After 13 dxe6 Black could consider 13... $\text{bxc}4!$?, but in practice he has preferred to recapture on e6:

a) 13... $\text{fxe}6$ allows an interesting pawn sacrifice: 14 c5! dxc5 15 $\text{Wc}2$ $\text{d}c6$ 16 $\text{B}ad1$ (16 $\text{d}e4$ $\text{d}d4$ 17 $\text{d}xd4$ cxd4 18 $\text{B}ad1$ e5 19 e3 $\text{d}f5$ transposes, but White could also try 18 $\text{B}ac1!$?) 16... $\text{d}d4$ 17 $\text{d}xd4$ cxd4 18 e3 e5 19 exd4 $\text{d}f5$ (instead 19...exd4?! 20 $\text{d}d5!$ $\text{d}g4$ 21 $\text{B}d2$ d3 22 $\text{W}xd3$ $\text{d}xb2$ 23 $\text{B}xb2$ c6 24 $\text{W}e4$ gave White a serious plus in Ki.Georgiev-D.Antic, Herceg Novi 2001) 20 $\text{d}e4$ (Bologan suggests White should try 20 $\text{Wc}1!$? exd4 21 $\text{d}d5$) 20...exd4 21 $\text{Wc}5$ $\text{B}f7$ 22 $\text{B}d2$ $\text{W}e7$ 23 $\text{W}xe7$ $\text{B}xe7$ 24 $\text{d}c5$ d3 25 $\text{d}xg7$ $\text{d}xg7$ was J.Horvath-P.Blehm, Budapest 2000. Here White should settle for 26 $\text{d}d5+$ $\text{c}f8$ 27 $\text{d}xd3$ $\text{B}d8$ 28 $\text{d}b4$ $\text{B}d6$ 29 $\text{B}fd1$ c5 with a level endgame.

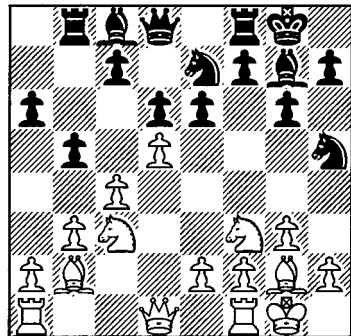
b) 13... $\text{d}xe6$ 14 cxb5 axb5 and now:



b1) 15 $\text{Wd}2$ $\text{d}f6$ (after 15... $\text{d}xb3$ 16 axb3 $\text{d}xb3$ 17 $\text{Wc}2$ $\text{d}xa1$ 18 $\text{B}xa1$ b4 19 $\text{d}d5$ White has the initiative) 16 $\text{d}g5$

and now 16... $\text{d}d7$ 17 $\text{d}ce4$ gave White an edge in L.Ortega-A.Martorelli, Campobasso 1999. Instead 16... $\text{d}xb3!$? 17 axb3 $\text{d}xb3$ 18 $\text{Wc}2$ $\text{d}xa1$ 19 $\text{B}xa1$ b4 looks quite playable because here 20 $\text{d}d5?$ loses to 20... $\text{d}xd5$ as the g5-knight is hanging.

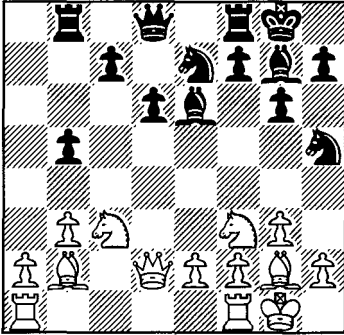
b2) 15 $\text{Wc}2$ $\text{d}f6$ 16 $\text{d}g5$ $\text{d}f5$ 17 e4 $\text{d}d7$ 18 $\text{B}ad1$ b4 19 $\text{d}e2$ $\text{B}e8$ 20 $\text{d}f4$ $\text{B}b5$ 21 h4 h6?! 22 e5! dxe5 23 $\text{d}xf7$ $\text{c}xf7$ 24 $\text{W}xg6+$ $\text{c}g8$ 25 $\text{d}h3$ gave White serious attacking chances in J.Ehvest-V.Bologan, Stratton Mountain 1999. Here 25... $\text{W}e7$ would fail to 26 $\text{d}xd7$ $\text{d}xd7$ 27 $\text{d}d5$. Instead of 21...h6?!, Black could throw in 21... $\text{B}c5$ 22 $\text{W}b1$ h6 and now 23 e5 dxe5 24 $\text{d}xf7$ $\text{c}xf7$ 25 $\text{W}xg6+$ $\text{c}g8$ 26 $\text{d}h3$ $\text{W}e7$ defends: for example, 27 $\text{d}xd7$ $\text{d}xd7$ 28 $\text{d}d5$ $\text{W}e6$ when Black is probably better.



13 dxe6 $\text{d}xe6$

Black can also play 13... $\text{fxe}6$ 14 c5 d5!? 15 $\text{d}d4$ $\text{d}d7!$ 16 f4 b4 17 $\text{d}a4$ $\text{d}c6$ 18 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{W}e7$ 19 $\text{Wc}2$ $\text{d}f6$ 20 $\text{B}ac1$ $\text{d}e4$ 21 $\text{B}fd1$ $\text{B}fd8$ 22 $\text{d}xg7$ $\text{W}xg7$ when he had good play in J.Szabolcsi-Y.Zimmerman, Budapest 2001.

14 cxb5 axb5 15 ♖d2



15...b4

This looks best, but 15...♖f6 is also logical. After 16 ♖g5 Black has:

a) 16...♗d7 17 ♖ce4 ♖f5 18 ♖ac1 ♖e8 19 ♗xg7 ♗xg7 20 ♖fd1 gave White pressure in M.Jirovsky-M.Tissir, Tanta 2001. Black lacks counterplay here.

b) 16...♗f5 17 ♖fd1 b4 18 ♖ce4 ♗xe4 (it is important to eliminate White's knights) 19 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 20 ♗xe4 ♗xb2 21 ♗xb2 ♗d7 was V.Ivanchuk-T.Radjabov, Dubai (rapid) 2002. Black is pretty solid here, but White still looks a little better after 22 ♖ac1.

c) 16...b4 17 ♖ce4 (17 ♖xe6 bxc3 18 ♖xd8 cxd2 19 ♖c6 ♖xc6 20 ♗xc6 d5! is unclear) and now:

c1) 17...♖ed5 18 ♖xe6 (after 18 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 19 ♖ac1?! ♗d7 20 ♖c4 c5 21 ♖d1 ♖b6 22 ♖f4?! ♗e7 23 h4 ♗f5 24 ♖f3 ♖a6 25 ♗a1 h6 White's position fell apart in A.Wojtkiewicz-A.Istratescu, Krynica 1998) 18...fxe6 19 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 20 ♖ac1 ♖d7?! (this loses material, but Black's position is still unpleasant after 20...c5 21 ♖fd1) 21 ♗xg7 ♗xg7 22 ♖c4

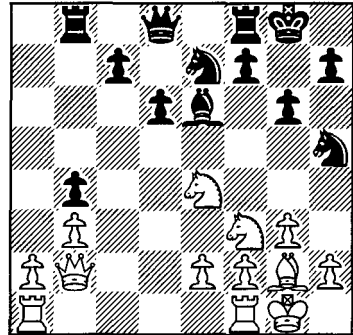
and White won a pawn in O.Cvitan-F.Jenni, Baden 1999.

c2) 17...♖xe4 is untried, but looks fine: for example, 18 ♖xe4 ♗xb2 19 ♗xb2 ♖d5 20 ♖fd1 f5 21 ♖g5 (or 21 ♖c5 dxc5 22 ♗e5 ♗f6 23 ♗xe6+ ♗xe6 24 ♗xd5 ♗f7) 21...♗xg5 22 ♖xd5!? ♗f6! and Black has little to fear.

16 ♖e4

Instead 16 ♖a4 ♗d5 17 ♗xg7 ♖xg7 18 ♖g5 ♗xg2 19 ♗xg2 ♖e6 is even according to Bologan.

16...♗xb2 17 ♗xb2



17...♗d5

Black should also consider the forcing 17...f5!? 18 ♖eg5 (safer is 18 ♖ed2 ♗d5, which would transpose to our main line) 18...♗d5 19 ♖d4 ♗d7 and it turns out that White cannot exploit the weak e6-square: 20 e4 (after 20 ♗xd5+?! ♖xd5 the black knight is ready to come into the c3-square and 21 ♖ge6? ♖fe8 would just lose material) 20...fxe4 21 ♖xe4 ♗xe4 22 ♗xe4 ♖f6 23 ♗g2 c5 24 ♖e2 ♖be8 was fine for Black in G.Lambert-C.Barnett, correspondence 2001.

18 ♜ed2 f5

Here too Black has a decent alternative in 18...c5 19 e4 ♙e6 20 ♜ad1 ♜c6, as in O.Cvitan-V.Tkachiev, Pula 1999.

19 ♜fd1 ♜f6 20 ♜ac1 ♜d7 21 ♜c4 ♙e4

Or 22 ♜e3 ♙a8 with balanced chances in Ki.Georgiev-T.Radjabov, Sarajevo 2002.

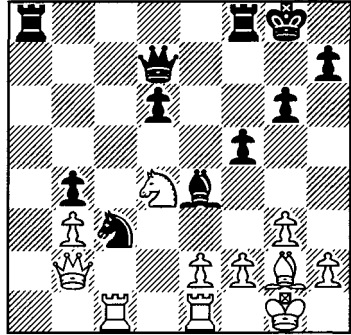
22 ♜e3 ♜ed5 23 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 24 a3 ♜c3

Black could also clamp the b4-square with 24...bxa3!? 25 ♜xa3 c5.

25 ♜e1 c5 26 axb4 cxb4 27 ♜d4 ♜a8

Both players have a well-placed

knight and chances were level in M.Bellegotti-C.Williams, correspondence 2003.

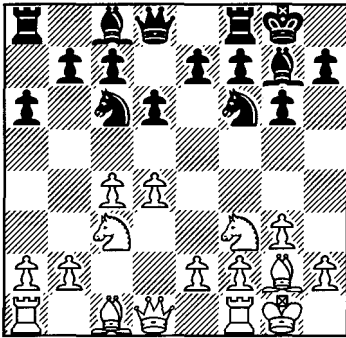


Chapter 5

Panno Variation

White's Other 8th Moves

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗f3 ♕g7 4 g3 0-0 5
 ♖g2 d6 6 0-0 ♗c6 7 ♗c3 a6



In this chapter we examine moves for White other than 8 d5, 8 h3 and 8 b3. These lines are not considered to be as critical, but they have their own venom and some of the positions that arise can be quite different from those we have considered thus far. Of these variations, I consider line 'C' to be fundamental to understanding the Panno and may be a bit underestimated, while line 'E' has become very popular. We have:

- A: 8 ♖d2
- B: 8 e3
- C: 8 e4
- D: 8 ♖e1
- E: 8 ♗d3

Other moves are less important:

a) 8 a4 a5 (securing the dark squares is very logical, but 8...♗a5 and 8...e5 could also be considered) 9 b3 ♖g4 10 ♖b2 ♗d7 11 d5 ♖xf3 12 exf3 ♗b4 13 ♖e1 ♗c5 14 ♖e3 c6 15 ♖b1 ♖e8 16 f4 ♗d7 gave Black a good position in R.Skomorokhin-V.Bologan, Biel 1993.

b) 8 a3 ♗a5 (a typical reaction with the b3-square weakened) 9 ♗d2 ♗d7!? (9...c5) 10 e3 c5 11 ♗e2 ♖b8 12 b4 ♗c6 and Black already had a slight initiative in V.Hort-A.Shirov, Bundesliga 1994.

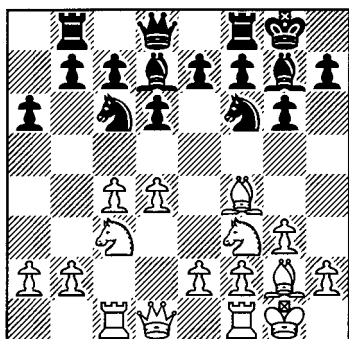
c) 8 ♗c2 is a strange move: 8...♖f5 (8...♖b8 and 8...♖g4 are decent alternatives) 9 e4 ♖g4 10 ♖e3 ♗d7 11 d5 (instead 11 ♗e2 is well met by 11...♗b4

intending ...c5, while 11 ♖d2 transposes to Line C11, but with both sides having a tempo less) 11...♙xf3 12 ♙xf3 (or 12 ♙xc6 ♙xg2) 12...♘d4 with an easy game for Black.

d) 8 ♗e1 does not carry any special idea. After 8...♙d7 9 e3 ♖b8 Black has normal play.

e) 8 ♘d5 is kind of an accelerated version line of Line C from the previous chapter. White will lack the possibility of playing a quick ♙b2 to cover the d-pawn, however. After 8...e6 (Black can consider 8...♗h5 and 8...♙g4 too) 9 ♗xf6+ ♖xf6 10 e3 (to cover d4; if 10 ♙g5 ♖f5 with similar play to that in Chapter 4) 10...♙d7 11 ♙d2 e5 12 d5 ♗d8 13 e4 ♖e7 14 ♖b3 (Nunn suggested that White be satisfied with 14 ♗h4 ♙f6 15 ♗f3) 14...b6 15 ♙c3 ♗b7 16 ♖c2 a5 Black had a very comfortable position in V.Korchnoi-J.Nunn, Biel 1986.

f) 8 ♙f4!? looks funny, but it has been seen a bit lately. After 8...♖b8 (of course 8...♙d7 is possible as well) 9 ♖c1 ♙d7 White has:

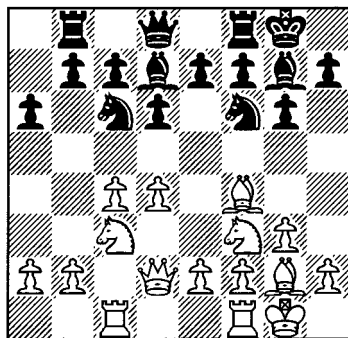


f1) 10 d5 ♗a5 11 b3 b5 12 cxb5 axb5

13 b4 ♗c4 14 ♗d4 ♗h5! 15 ♖c2 ♗xf4 16 gxf4 e5 17 dxe6 fxe6 when the bishop-pair and better structure gave Black a clear advantage in B.Itkis-V.Bologan, Igalo 1994.

f2) 10 e4 ♖e8!? 11 d5 ♗a5 12 ♖e2 c5 13 e5 ♗h5 14 ♙e3 b5 15 cxb5 axb5 16 e6 fxe6 17 dxe6 ♙xe6 18 ♗xb5 was B.Larsen-J.Nunn, Tilburg 1982. Now 18...♖d7!? gives Black decent play: for example, 19 ♗g5 (not 19 ♗c3? ♙c4, while 19 a4 ♙b3 gives Black counter-play) 19...♖xb5 20 ♖xb5 ♖xb5 21 ♗xe6 ♖xb2 with an unclear ending.

f3) 10 ♖d2



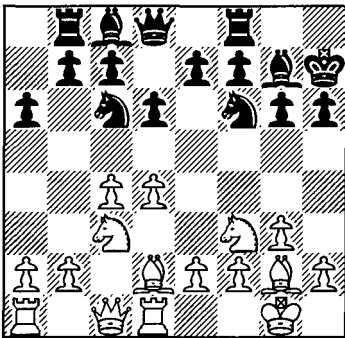
10...b5 (instead of 10...♖e8!? 11 ♙h6 was E.Dizdarevic-P.Svidler, Plovdiv 2010, and here 11...♙xh6!? 12 ♖xh6 e5 looks okay for Black) 11 ♗d5 ♗e4 12 ♖c2 (better than 12 ♖e3 f5 13 ♙h6 bxc4 14 ♙xg7 ♙xg7 15 ♖xc4 ♙e6 16 ♖xc6 ♙xd5 17 ♖xa6 ♖xb2 with excellent counter-play in M.Grabarczyk-R.Kasimdzhanov, German League 2004) 12...f5 13 cxb5 ♖xb5 (worse is 13...axb5 14 ♗xc7 ♖xc7 15 d5 with the initiative) 14 ♗c3 and here 14...♗xc3 15 ♖xc3 e5 16 dxe5 gave

White a big advantage in E.L'Ami-M.Erdogdu, Rijeka 2010, because 16...dxe5 can be met with 17 a4!. Instead Black could have tried 14...Bb4!?

g) Provoking Black's next move with 8 g5 does not seem to improve White's chances at all. In fact, the extra move can be rather useful: 8...h6 9 d2 (instead 9 e3 Bb8 10 h3 is Line A1 in Chapter 3, while 9 f4 Bb8 and 9 xf6 xf6 10 Wd2 g7 do not promise White anything) leaves Black with a free ...h6 compared to Line A, below, to which the position should be compared.

Some examples:

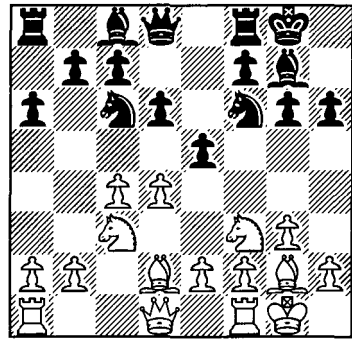
g1) 9...Bb8 10 Wc1 (trying to exploit the placement of Black's h-pawn; after the analogous 10 Bc1 Black can still just play 10...d7, while 10...e5! looks especially good – compare to note 'e' to Black's 9th move in Line A) 10...gh7 11 Bd1 and now:



g11) 11...d7 12 e1 b5 13 cxb5 axb5 14 d5 a7 (14...a5) 15 b4 c6 16 We3 Bb6 17 d4 cxd5 18 dxd5 dxd5 19 xd5 e6 with level chances in G.Sargissian-V.Bologan, Calvia 2007.

g12) 11...g4 12 d5 a5 13 b3 c5 14 h3 xf3 15 exf3 b5 gives Black good play. After 16 e2? bxc4 17 Wa3 (if 17 bxc4 d7 and White loses material after both 18 Bb1 Bxb1 19 Wxb1 dxc4 and 18 c3 xc3 19 Wxc3 de5) 17...Bb5 18 bxc4 dxc4 19 Wxa6 Wb6 20 Wxb6 Bxb6 21 c3 a8 with tremendous pressure against White's queenside in A.Kogan-I.Smirin, Israeli League 1999.

g2) 9...e5 and here:

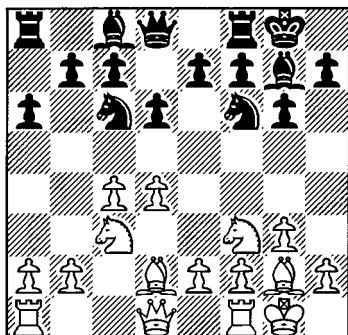


g21) 10 dxe5 dxe5 (here White does not even have g5 available) 11 Wc1 e4!? (11...gh7) 12 e1 gh7 13 dxe4 dxe4 14 xe4 d4 15 Wd1 (Black also has good play after 15 d3 Be8) 15...We7 (or 15...Be8) 16 d3 g4 17 f3 eh3 18 Bf2 Bb8 19 c3 b5 20 cxb5 axb5 21 d2 c5 and Black had excellent play for the pawn in V.Loginov-Y.Vovk, St Petersburg 2004.

g22) 10 d5 d4 11 e1 d7 12 b4 (after 12 e3 d5 13 d3 We7 Black is ready to play ...e4 and 14 e4 d4 15 d2 b5 gives Black good counterplay) 12...We7 13 Bb1 e4! 14 a4 Bfe8 15 a5 c6

16 ♖c1 ♘g4!? (the simple 16...♗f5 gives Black a nice position) 17 ♗xe4?! cxd5 18 ♗c3 (if 18 cxd5 ♖b5) 18...♗xe2+ 19 ♗xe2 ♜xe2 20 ♜xe2 ♝xe2 21 ♖f3 ♞ae8! 22 ♖xe2 ♝xe2 23 cxd5 ♗xf2! and Black had more than enough for the exchange in V.Loginov-K.Sakaev, Kazan 2005.

A) 8 ♖d2



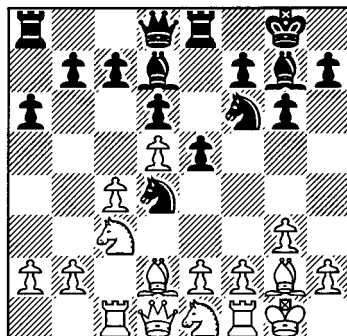
White simply develops and prepares ♖c1. This move does not really fight for the initiative, however, and sometimes Black may even exploit the placement of the bishop due to White's lack of control of the d4-square.

8...♞b8

Instead 8...♖d7 9 ♖c1 ♞b8 transposes, while 8...♖g4 9 d5 ♗a5 (instead 9...♖xf3 10 exf3 ♗d4 11 f4 favours White) 10 b3 c5 11 dxc6 ♗xc6 12 ♖c1 ♞b8 is note 'b' to Black's 9th move, below. The main alternative is 8...e5 and then:

a) 9 d5 ♗d4 (9...♗e7 10 e4 must be better for White; it is the 7...e5 8 d5 ♗e7 variation with ♖d2 and ...a6 thrown in) 10 ♗e1 (10 ♗xd4 exd4 11 ♗e4 ♗xe4 12

♖xe4 ♖h3 is equal according to Bologan) 10...♞e8 (or 10...♖d7 11 e3 ♗f5) 11 ♖c1 ♖d7 and now:



a1) 12 b4 b5!? 13 e3 ♗f5 14 a4 e4 15 cxb5 axb5 16 a5 was C.Baginskaite-V.Bologan, Stratton Mountain 1999. Now Bologan suggests 16...h5 17 ♗c2 h4 with counterplay.

a2) 12 e3 ♗f5 13 e4 ♗d4 14 ♗d3 c5 15 dxc6 bxc6 (or 15...♖xc6 16 ♖e3 ♗d7 17 ♞e1 a5 18 ♗d5 as in M.Drasko-D.Popovic, Budva 2003; here 18...♗c5 or 18...b6 would be fairly level) 16 c5 ♖e6 17 b3 (instead 17 cxd6 ♜xd6 18 ♖e3 ♞ed8 gives Black good play) was M.Drasko-M.Roos, Arco 2000, when Black could try 17...d5!?

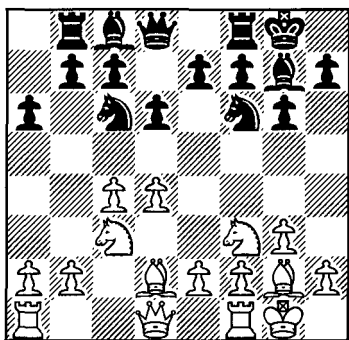
b) 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 ♖g5 ♖e6 and here:

b1) 11 ♜a4 leads to nothing after 11...h6 12 ♞fd1 ♜e7 13 ♖xf6 (or 13 ♖e3 ♞fd8) 13...♖xf6 14 ♗d5 ♖xd5 15 cxd5 ♗d4 16 ♗xd4 exd4 with equality.

b2) 11 ♗d5 ♖xd5 12 cxd5 ♜xd5 13 ♜xd5 ♗xd5 14 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 15 ♖xd5 c6 16 ♖b3 (else ...♗c4 will come) 16...h6 (or 16...a5 17 ♞ad1 a4 18 ♖c2 ♞fe8 19 b3

axb3 20 ♖xb3 b5 21 ♜c1 ♝c4 22 ♗xc4
 bxc4 23 ♜xc4 ♜xe2 with an imminent
 draw in Z.Ribli-V.Tkachiev, Senec 1998)
 17 ♗d2 a5 18 a4 ♜d7 19 ♜fb1 ♜c5 20
 ♗c2 ♜fd8 21 ♗e1 ♜e6 and Black's activ-
 ity compensated for White's bishop-pair
 in C.Ionescu-N.Djukic, Bucharest 2004.

b3) 11 ♜xd8 ♜fxd8 transposes to
 Line E1. Here White loses the tempo
 with ♗d2-g5 instead of ♜d3xd8. This
 line is pretty sterile and not terribly fun
 for Black, as we'll see, which is probably
 enough of a reason to avoid 8...e5, espe-
 cially with good alternatives available.



9 ♜c1

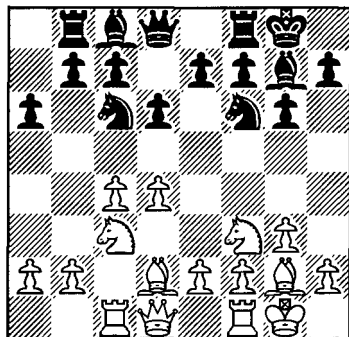
Other moves offer nothing:

a) 9 a4 e5 (or 9...a5) 10 d5 ♜d4.

b) 9 d5 ♜a5 10 b3 c5 is note 'b23' to
 White's 9th move at the beginning of
 Chapter 1.

c) 9 b3 e5 10 d5 and now the sim-
 plest is 10...♜d4, but 10...♜e7 is also
 playable. Usually Black avoids this struc-
 ture, but White has made a couple of
 very slow moves. After 11 e4 c5 12 ♜e1
 b5 13 ♜d3 ♜d7 14 ♜c2 f5 15 f3 ♜f6 a
 balanced, yet dynamic position was

reached in G. Mittelman-P.Wang, Qing-
 dao 2002.



9...♗d7

This flexible move is the most com-
 mon, but there are several alternatives:

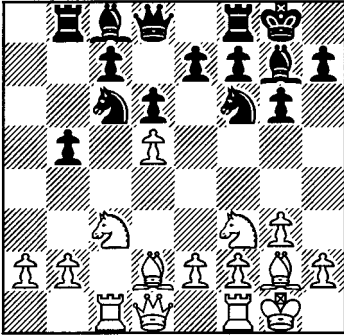
a) 9...e6 10 b3 ♜e8 11 d5 ♜e7 12 e4
 b5 13 ♜e1 b4 14 ♜a4 ♗d7 15 dxe6 ♗xe6
 16 e5 dxe5 17 ♜xe5 gave White a pleas-
 ant advantage in G.Mittelman-C.Braga,
 Sao Paulo 2003.

b) 9...♗g4 10 d5 ♜a5 (this is more
 solid than 10...♗xf3 11 exf3 ♜d4 12 ♗e3
 ♜f5) 11 b3 c5 12 dxc6 ♜xc6 is similar to
 note 'b' to White's 10th move, except
 here Black's bishop is on g4 instead of
 d7, which makes little difference.

c) 9...♜d7!? 10 d5 (the untried 10
 e3!? looks a little passive, but is of
 course playable) 10...♜ce5 11 ♜xe5
 ♜xe5 12 b3 c5 13 dxc6 (13 f4 ♜g4 14 e3
 b5 gave Black counterplay in P.Nikolic-
 Ye Jiangchuan, Dubai 1986) 13...bxc6 is
 fine for Black. After the overly-ambitious
 14 c5?! dxc5! (14...d5 was also okay for
 Black in V.Bukal-D.Rogic, Medulin 1997,
 but taking the pawn is more ambitious)
 15 ♜a4 c4 16 bxc4 ♗e6 Black had very

good play in V.Bukal-G.Sax, Pula 2001.

d) 9...b5 10 cxb5 axb5 11 d5 (if 11 cxb5 bxb5 12 cxc6 bxb2) and now:

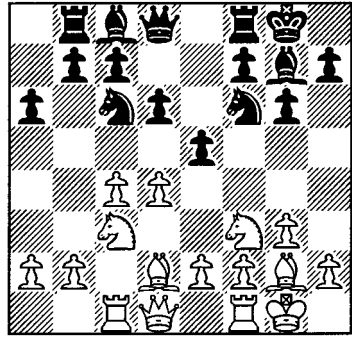


d1) 11... cxa7 12 b4 c5 13 dxc6 cxc6 14 cxb5 cxb4 15 a4 cxa6 16 cfd4 e b7 17 c c6 cxc6 18 cxc6 (18 cxc6 !?) 18... c d7 (18... c c5 !?) was V.Tukmakov-G.Sax, Szirak 1985. Here 19 e e3 looks a bit better for White.

d2) 11... ca5 12 b4 (12 c d4 b4 13 c b5 can be met with the thematic trick 13... cxd5 ! 14 e xd5 c5) 12... c c4 13 e e1 (13 c d4 !?) 13... c d7 14 c d4 W e8 15 c c6 was M.Mukhin-V.Tukmakov, Baku 1972. Here Bologan gives 15... cxc6 16 dxc6 c e5 17 e e3 ?! cxc6 18 c d5 cxd5 19 Wxd5 c e5 20 cxc7 b b6 21 W b3 e6 with the idea of ...d5 as equal. Instead White could have tried 17 a4 bxa4 18 W xa4 e6 19 b5 d5 20 c d1 ! with ideas like e b4 and c e3 .

e) 9...e5!? looks pretty good. Compared to 8...e5, throwing in c c1 and ... b b8 actually seems to help Black! This is because there are some positions where White may play cxc7 and Black's rook will not be hanging as it would be

on a8, while White's c1-rook can rather surprisingly turn out to be vulnerable.

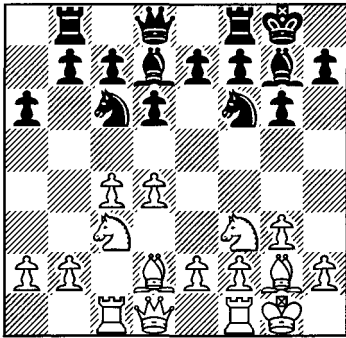


Now:

e1) 10 dxe5 dxe5 11 e g5 h6 (after 11... e e6 12 W a4 h6 13 e xf6 e xf6 14 c fd1 W e8 15 c d5 e d8 Black had the bishop-pair, but his position looked rather awkward in Z.ilic-M.Hebden, Cappelle la Grande 1992) 12 Wxd8 cxd8 13 e xf6 e xf6 14 c d5 e g7 15 c fd1 (if 15 cxc7 ? Black can play 15...e4! because there is no rook hanging on a8; after 16 c e1 c d4 ! the c1-rook is vulnerable and Black has a strong initiative) 15... e e6 16 c d2 (the insertion of moves also favours Black after 16 cxc7 cxd1 + 17 cxd1 e xc4 with a clear advantage) 16... c bc8 17 c e4 e f8 ! 18 c f1 c g7 was good for Black in P.Tregubov-T.Markowski, Saint Vincent 2000. White's little initiative has dried up, and Black soon pushed back the white knights and utilized his bishop-pair in the ending.

e2) 10 d5 c d4 11 c e1 c5 12 e3 (after 12 dxc6 bxc6 the rook again proves to be useful on b8 and after 13 b3 e b7 14

♠d3 ♖e7 15 ♙g5 ♗e6 16 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 17 e3 ♙f7 18 ♗e2 f5 Black stood well in A.Kveinys-T.Markowski, Koszalin 1999) 12...♗f5 13 a4 ♜e8! (Black intends to play ...e4 himself, while if White plays e4 Black's knight will return to the d4-square) 14 ♗d3 (or 14 ♗c2 h5 15 h3 ♗e7 16 a5 e4 V.Bukal-S.Zelenika, Rijeka 2001) 14...e4 15 ♗f4 h5 with counterplay in A.Kinsman-M.Hebden, Cappelle la Grande 1991.



10 b3

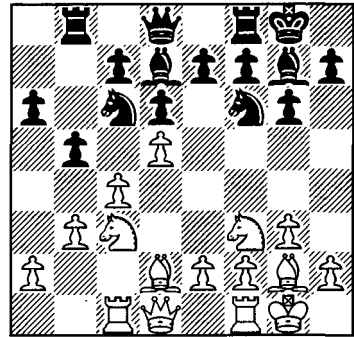
Others:

a) 10 a3 should probably be met with 10...e5 11 dxe5 (or 11 d5 ♗d4) 11...dxe5, rather than with 10...b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 b4 when White has a slight edge: for example, 12...e6 13 e4 ♗e7 14 ♜e1 and Black lacks his own play.

b) 10 d5 ♗a5 11 b3 (11 ♗b1 c5 12 ♗e1 b6 13 e4 e5 14 dxe6 ♙xe6 15 b3 ♗c6 was fine for Black in R.Zysk-A.Jankovic, Kavala 2006) 11...c5 12 dxc6 (or 12 ♗e1 b5) 12...♗xc6 13 ♗d5! ♗xd5 (instead 13...♗e4 14 ♙e3 e6 15 ♙b6 ♗e8 16 ♗f4 gives White an edge according to Bologan) 14 cxd5 ♗e5 15 ♗xe5

♙xe5 16 ♙h6 ♜e8 17 ♗d2 and Black has a little trouble finding a place for his queen, but I think he can solve his problems with 17...b5 (instead Bologan gives 17...♗b6 18 ♙e3 ♗b5 19 ♜c7 with a nice edge for White) 18 ♙e3 (or 18 ♜c2 ♗b6) 18...b4 19 ♙d4 ♙xd4 20 ♗xd4 a5 with ideas like ...♜c8 or ...a4 and ...♗a5.

10...b5 11 d5



11...♗a7

Black can also play 11...♗a5 with the idea 12 ♗xb5 ♗xb3 (or 12...♗xc4), but 11...b4!? may be best. For example:

a) 12 dxc6 bxc3 13 cxd7 (13 ♙xc3 ♙xc6 is fine for Black) 13...cxd2 14 ♗xd2 c5! stops both c4-c5 and ♗d4-c6, giving Black a decent position.

b) 12 ♗a4 ♗a5 13 a3 c5 14 dxc6 (after 14 axb4 cxb4 Black is even a bit better, because 15 ♗d4 fails to 15...♗xd5) 14...♗xc6 15 axb4 ♗xb4 with approximate equality.

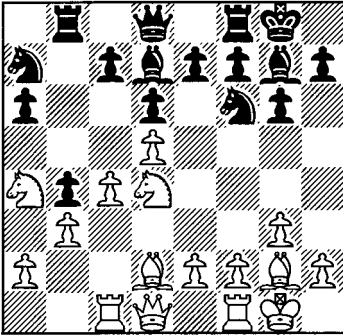
12 ♗d4

Instead 12 ♙e3 c5 13 dxc6 ♗xc6 14 c5 dxc5 15 ♙xc5 was B.Larsen-G.Sax, Niksic 1983. Here Janjgava suggests 15...♜c8 with equality.

12...b4

12...♘g4!? is also possible.

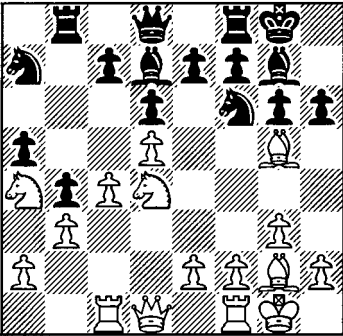
13 ♖a4



13...a5

Black could also consider sacrificing the exchange with 13...♘d5 14 cxd5 ♙xd4 15 ♙h6 ♙f6 (not 15...♙g7?? 16 ♙xg7 ♖xg7 17 ♗d4+) 16 ♙xf8 ♖xf8 with complicated play.

14 ♙g5 h6



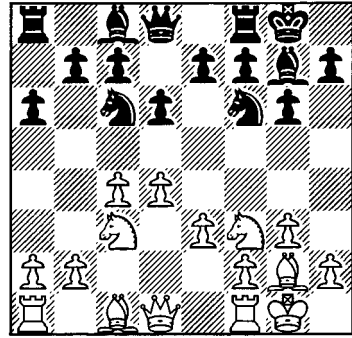
15 ♙xf6

White feels compelled to make room for his pieces. Instead 15 ♙f4 e5 16 dxex6 fxe6 gives Black good play.

15...♙xf6 16 ♗d3 ♗e8 17 ♖b2 c5 18 dxc6 ♖xc6 19 ♖xc6 ♙xc6

Black had no problems here in G.Milos-B.Socko, Turin Olympiad 2006.

B) 8 e3



This move is also pretty tame, but Black should have some ideas of how to create counterplay.

8...♖b8

I think that following the main plan is best, but Black could also try 8...♙d7 9 ♗e2 e5 10 d5 ♖e7 11 e4 b5!?

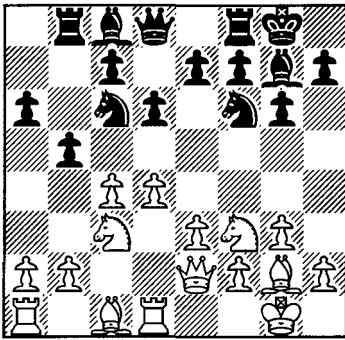
Instead 8...e5 9 d5 ♖e7 10 e4 leaves Black with ...a6 for free compared to the classical variation with 7...a6) 8 d5 ♖e7, but this does not help much. Black tried to use the extra move with 10...b5 11 ♗e1 bxc4 12 ♖d2 c6 13 ♖xc4 cxd5 14 exd5 ♖f5 15 b3, but White still had an advantage in Z.Azmaiparashvili-A.David, Antwerp 1998.

9 ♗e2

Instead 9 b3 just transposes to Line A from Chapter 4, while Bologan points out that 9 ♖e1 can be met by the typical 9...♙g4! 10 f3 ♙d7 11 ♖d3 b5 with counterplay.

9...b5 10 ♖d1

White cannot win a pawn with 10 cxb5 axb5 11 ♖xb5 because of 11...♗a6 12 a4 ♖a7. Instead 10 b3 bxc4 transposes to Line A of Chapter 4 again, while 10 ♖d2 would be met with 10...♗g4.



10...e6

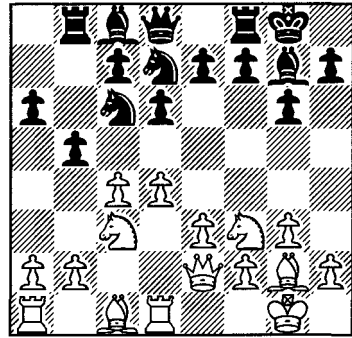
Black meets White's noncommittal play with a flexible move of his own. There are several alternatives:

a) 10...b4 is Black's most common move, but 11 ♖d5 e6!? (White has the initiative after both 11...♖d7 12 a3 and 11...♖h5 12 a3, while 11...♖xd5 12 cxd5 ♖a5 13 e4 c6 14 dxc6 ♖xc6 15 ♗e3 was good for White in V.Malaniuk-A.Bonte, Galatzi 2007) 12 ♖xf6+ ♗xf6 (after 12...♗xf6 13 e4, 13...e5? is not possible because of 14 ♗g5 ♖xd4 15 ♗xd4) 13 e4 e5 14 dxe5 ♖xe5 15 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 16 c5 ♗f6 17 cxd6 cxd6 18 ♗b1 gives White a slight edge.

b) 10...♖a5 looks misguided: 11 cxb5 axb5 12 b4! ♖c4 (after 12...♖c6 both 13 a3 and 13 ♗b1 give White an edge) 13 ♖xb5 (13 a4 c6 14 axb5 cxb5 15 e4 also looks very good) 13...d5 14 a4 c6 15 ♖a3

left White with an extra pawn in V.Malaniuk-B.Tokarski, Koszalin 2008, as Black cannot play 15...♗xb4 because of 16 ♖xc4 ♗xc4 17 ♖e5 ♗c3 18 ♗b2.

c) 10...♖d7!? and here:



c1) 11 d5 ♖a5 (after 11...♖ce5 12 ♖d4! White targets the c6-square, but 11...♖a7 could be considered) 12 cxb5 axb5 13 ♖xb5 ♗a6 14 a4 and now Black should avoid 14...♖b3? 15 ♗a3 ♖xc1 16 ♗xc1 and instead play 14...♖b6! with counterplay. Black has ideas like ...♖xa4 and ...♖xd5 followed by ...c6.

c2) 11 ♗b1 e5 (here the untried 11...b4 makes a lot of sense) 12 cxb5 axb5 13 d5 ♖e7 14 b4 (or 14 ♖xb5 ♗a6 15 a4 ♖c5 when Black creates counterplay after 16 b3 ♗d7 or 16 ♗c2 ♗d7 17 ♖c3 ♗b4 18 b3 e4) 14...♖b6 15 e4 ♗d7 16 ♗d2 ♗c8 17 ♖xb5 ♖bxd5 18 ♖xd6?! (Golubev suggests 18 a4 ♗xb5 19 axb5, as White can play ♗f1) 18...cxd6 19 exd5 ♗b5 20 ♗e1 ♗a6 and Black had active play for the pawn in D.Jojuan-N.Mamedov, Cappelle la Grande 2010.

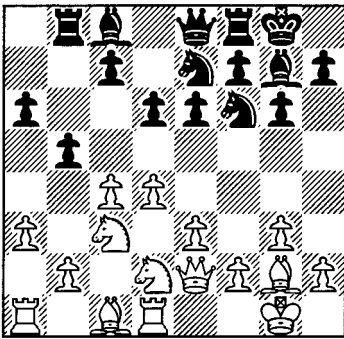
11 ♖d2

After 11 b3 Black has a choice:

a) 11...♙b7 was Bologan's suggestion. If White plays 12 cxb5 axb5 13 ♖xb5 (or 13 ♜xb5?! ♜xd4) Black wins back the pawn with 13...♙a6 14 a4 ♖a7.

b) 11...bxc4 12 ♜xc4 ♖b4 is similar to Line A of Chapter 4. Here Black cannot play ...♙e6, but the bishop has another route after 13 ♜e2 with 13...a5! 14 ♙a3 ♙a6 15 ♜d2 ♜e7 16 ♜ac1 ♜fd8 17 h3 c5 by when Black had good play in O.Girya-A.Bodnaruk, Dagomys 2010.

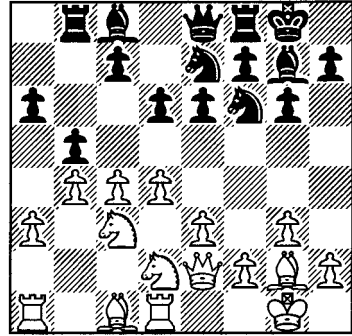
11...♖e7 12 a3 ♜e8



Black supports the b5-pawn and removes his queen from the sight of White's d1-rook.

13 b4

Malaniuk has preferred 13 ♜b1, but this looks a bit pointless. After 13...♙b7 14 ♙xb7 ♜xb7 15 b4 c6 16 e4 d5! 17 e5 ♖d7 18 c5 ♖f5 19 ♖f3 (a draw was agreed here in V.Malaniuk-A.Fedorov, Samara 1998) 19...♜e7 20 ♜e1 f6 21 h4 fxe5 22 dxe5 in V.Malaniuk-A.Mista, Rowy 2000, Black could have struck a serious blow with 22...♖xe5! 23 ♖xe5 ♖d4 followed by ...♙xe5 when he has a very healthy extra pawn.



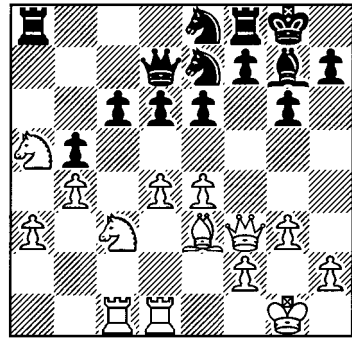
13...♙b7 14 ♙xb7 ♜xb7 15 ♖b3

If White captures on b5 first with 15 cxb5 axb5 16 ♖b3 Black can play 16...♖fd5 with equality.

15...♜b8

Black could also consider 15...c6 16 e4 d5 with play similar to the note to White's 13th move.

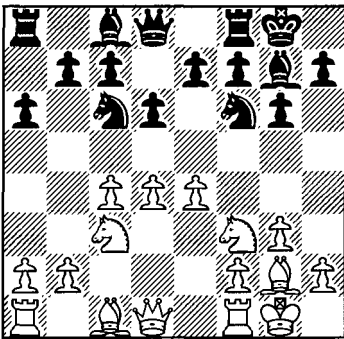
16 cxb5 axb5 17 e4 ♜d7 18 ♙e3 c6 19 ♜f3 ♖e8 20 ♜ac1 ♜a8 21 ♖a5



This was N.Ioseliani-A.Safranska, Saint Vincent 2000. Here Black could have played 21...d5 with the idea of ...♖d6-c4. If 22 e5 Black can play 22...f6 with counterplay, or 22...♖c8 with the idea of ...♖b6-c4.

C) 8 e4

This move almost seems naive at first due to Black's reply, but it should not be taken too lightly. If White plays casually then Black can indeed obtain a good game with simple means, but if White is more familiar with the subtleties of the position then Black can easily find himself drifting. Many of the positions that arise are similar to those that can be found in some other variations, so this line is worthy of careful study.



8...g4

This pin puts pressure on the d4-square. Black's play is thematic and good, but there is not really anything wrong with 8...b8. After 9 h3 we are in Chapter Two. Otherwise, if 9 d5 a5, while 9 e5 dxe5 10 dxe5 g4 does not lead anywhere.

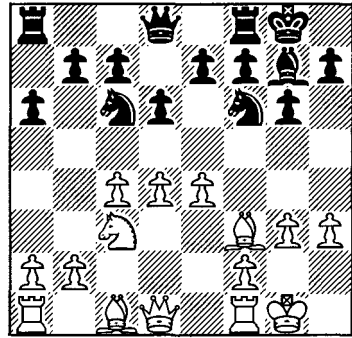
After 8...g4 White can break the pin immediately or he can reinforce the d4-square.

C1: 9 h3
C2: 9 e3

C1) 9 h3

White continues his 'naive' play, but matters are not as simple as they first appear.

9...xf3 10 xf3



10...d7

Black has an alternate move order here with the immediate 10...e5. Now 11 dxe5 dxe5 is very comfortable for Black, while 11 e2?! exd4 12 dxd4 e5 gives White trouble: for example, 13 g2 (White loses a pawn after 13 e2 dxe4 and an exchange after 13 b3 dxf3+ 14 Wxf3 d7 with the idea of ...c5) 13...dxc4 14 Wb3 db6 15 e3 e8 16 Wc2 d5 and Black had an extra pawn and the initiative in E.Epp-D.Vigorito, Natick 2009. So White should play 11 d5 d4 12 g2 c5 13 dxc6 bxc6 14 b4 and now 14...d7 15 e3 transposes to the main line, but Black can also try:

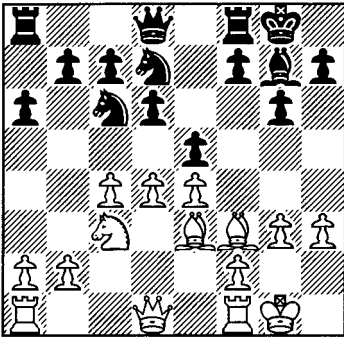
a) 14...a5 15 b5 Wc8 16 a3 (this looks odd; White could instead try 16 e3 or 16 e2!?) 16...We6 17 Wd3 f8 18 e2 d7 19 ab1 ab8 20 bxc6 Bxb1 21 Bxb1 Bxc6 was level in A.Rustemov-E.Inarkiev, Sochi 2004.

b) 14...♖e7 15 ♙e3 ♜d7 16 ♚d3 ♜fb8 (Black's plan to double rooks does not impress, so perhaps 16...♚e6 17 ♜fd1 ♜fc8 should be tried) 17 ♜ab1 ♜b7 18 ♜b2 a5 19 b5 ♚e6 20 ♜fb1 ♜c5 21 ♚f1 ♜ab8 22 h4 (22 a4) 22...a4 23 a3 ♚e8 24 ♜b4 ♜c2 25 ♙xc5 dxc5 26 ♜xa4 ♜d4 27 ♜a5 with an extra pawn in F.Berkes-A.Motylev, Moscow 2004.

11 ♙e3

Instead 11 d5 ♜d4 with the idea of ...c5 is fine for Black, while 11 ♜e2 could be met simply with 11...e5 12 d5 ♜d4 or even 11...♜a5! with the idea of ...c5.

11...e5



12 d5

White must advance if he wants to play for an advantage. Other moves are harmless, at best:

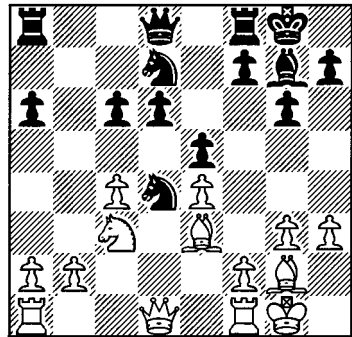
a) 12 dxe5 dxe5 is very satisfactory for Black, because of his grip on the dark squares, especially d4. One example: 13 ♙g2 ♜d4 14 ♜e2 ♜c5 15 ♜c1 (after 15 ♜xd4 exd4 16 ♙f4 d3 Black has the initiative) 15...a5 16 ♚d2 ♜de6! and Black was better in L.Kwartler-D.Vigorito, Parsippany 2011.

b) 12 ♜e2 runs into 12...♚f6! with a double attack on f3 and d4. This is a trick worth remembering. White can avoid material loss, but Black is still doing well: 13 ♙g4 exd4 (13...♜b6 14 d5 ♜d4 with ideas like ...♜xc4 or ...h5 is also good) 14 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 15 ♙xd4 (Black is doing well after 15 ♙xd7 ♜f3+ 16 ♙g2 ♜e5) 15...♚xd4 16 ♚xd4 ♙xd4 17 ♙xd7 ♜ad8 18 ♙a4 f5 and Black even had a slight initiative in J.Carstensen-M.Van Delft, Kemer 2007.

12...♜d4 13 ♙g2 c5 14 dxc6

White really needs to play this or else Black's entrenched d4-knight gives him an easy game: for example 14 f4 exf4 15 gxf4 b5 16 ♜e2 ♚b6 17 cxb5 ♜xe2+ 18 ♚xe2 axb5 and Black was much better in D.Plotkin-D.Vigorito, Boxborough 2008.

14...bxc6



This is a very important structure. With his strong knight on d4, things look very nice for Black positionally. Strategically, however, it is not so easy to come up with a good plan without allowing White's bishops greater scope.

15 b4

White seizes space on the queenside. Instead 15 ♖e2 ♜b6 allows Black to maintain control of the d4-square, while 15 f4 could be met with 15...♞b8, 15...♜a5 or 15...a5!?. A couple of other moves have been seen in practice:

a) 15 ♔xd4 exd4 16 ♖e2 ♜b6 17 ♞b1 a5 gave Black good play in R.Perhinig-K.Neumeier, Austrian League 2002.

b) 15 ♜d2 ♜a5 16 ♖h2 (a typical trick is 16 b3?? ♜xc3) 16...♜b4 17 b3 ♖c5 18 ♞ad1 a5 with a queenside initiative in S.Fedukovic-D.Conterno, correspondence 2006.

15...c5

This weakens the d5-square, but Black hopes to create counterplay against White's pawns. It is difficult to say what Black's best course of action is. Here 15...♜e7 16 ♜d3 is note 'b' to Black's 10th move, above. Instead 15...♖b6 is a typical move to attack the c4-pawn. After 16 ♜d3 several games of Abramovic have illustrated White's chances in this line. White is ready to play ♞fd1 and then ♔f1 to cover the c4-pawn. Some examples:

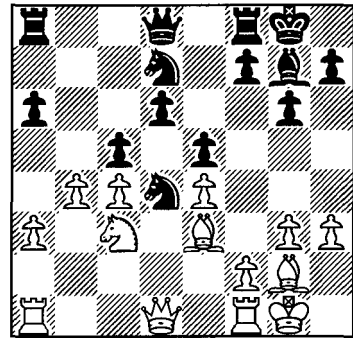
a) 16...c5 17 bxc5! dxc5 18 ♞fd1 (or simply 18 ♖d5) 18...♜d6 19 ♞ab1 ♞ab8 20 ♖d5 ♖xd5 21 cxd5 ♞bc8 22 ♜c4 and White had a useful edge in B.Abramovic-D.Popovic, Herceg Novi 2005.

b) 16...♜d7 17 ♞fd1 ♜e6 18 ♔f1 ♞fd8 19 ♞ac1 a5 (premature is 19...d5 20 cxd5 cxd5 21 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 22 exd5 ♞xd5 23 ♜e4 ♞dd8 24 ♔xd4 exd4 25 ♜xe6 fxe6 26 ♞c6 a5 27 b5 with a huge

advantage in B.Abramovic-A.Rmus, Banja Luka 2004) 20 b5 ♖d7 21 ♔g2 ♖c5 22 ♜f1 and now instead of 22...cxb5?! 23 cxb5 ♞ab8 24 ♞b1 with a clear advantage in B.Abramovic-M.Savic, Pancevo 2006, maintaining the tension with 22...♞ab8 looks okay for Black.

16 a3

It is too early to play 16 b5?! ♖b6 (also good is 16...♜a5!? 17 ♔d2 ♜b4) 17 ♜d3 axb5 18 cxb5? (better is 18 ♖xb5, although Black still has the initiative after 18...♞a4!) 18...♞a3, as in O.Ilic-D.Kuljasevic, Zagreb 2005. With ideas like ...♞xc3 and ...♖a4, Black has the upper hand.



16...♖b6!?

Black has a couple of sensible alternatives:

a) 16...♞b8 17 ♞b1 (White could also play 17 ♖d5 ♖b6 18 ♜d3) 17...cxb4 18 axb4 ♜c7 19 ♜d3 ♞fc8 20 c5?! (a panicky reaction; better is 20 ♖d5 ♜xc4 21 ♞fd1 when White has some compensation for the pawn) 20...dxc5 21 ♖d5 ♜d6 and Black had an extra pawn in V.Nedilko-V.Bologan, Warsaw 2006.

b) 16...cxb4 17 axb4 a5 (instead 17...b6 18 ♖d3 is our main line) 18 bxa5 (also possible is 18 b5 b6 19 ♖d3 ♗c7 20 d5 ♗xc4 21 ♗xc4 dxc4 22 ♖fb1) 18..♙xa5 19 d b5! ♙xa1 (White maintains the initiative in the symmetrical structure that arises after 19...dxb5 20 cxb5 ♙xb5 21 ♗xd6 d f6 22 ♖fd1 ♗xd6 23 ♙xd6) 20 ♗xa1 d c5 21 ♗a7 and White still had pressure in B.Macieja-P.Acs, Lubniewice 2003. Here Acs and Hazai have suggested Black might hold with 21...dcb3 22 ♖b1 ♗a8 23 ♗xa8 ♙xa8 24 dxd6 ♙f8 25 d b5 ♙c5, but this is clearly no fun for Black.

17 ♗d3 cxb4

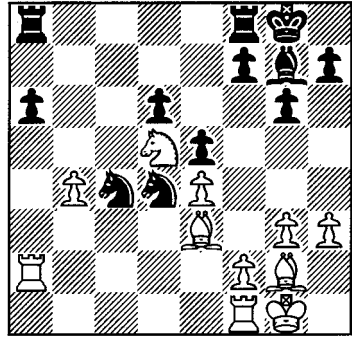
Black goes after the c4-pawn. We will take this as the main line because it is the most direct and illustrates some of the dangers Black may face. However, it is probably better to keep the tension with 17...♗c7!? 18 ♖fc1!? (after 18 ♖fd1 Black could play 18...♖fc8!? or 18...cxb4 19 axb4 ♗xc4 20 ♗xc4 dxc4, which similar to main line but White has at least spent a move on ♖fd1) 18...d b3 19 d d5 dxd5 (better than 19...dxc1 20 ♖xc1 dxd5 21 cxd5 when White has excellent compensation for the exchange) 20 ♗xb3 dxe3 21 ♗xe3 ♖fb8 with a level position.

18 axb4 ♗c8 19 d d5 ♗xc4

Instead 19...dxd5 20 exd5! would give White an edge.

20 ♗xc4 dxc4 21 ♙a2!

White prepares to double rooks on the a-file. Black's extra pawn does not have much importance here.



21...a5?!

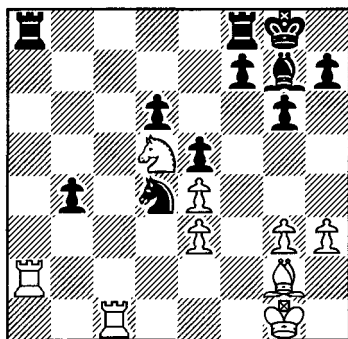
This works out in the game, but White missed a good opportunity. It is difficult to offer advice however, as Black also has problems after 21...dxe3 22 fxe3 d e6 23 ♖fa1. Probably the best chance was 21...♖fb8 22 ♖fa1 dxe3 23 fxe3 d b3, but here too White can keep up the pressure with 24 ♖d1 a5 25 ♙a3 a4 26 ♙f1 or 24 ♖b1 d c5 25 ♖c1.

22 ♖c1?

White could secure a large advantage with 22 ♙xd4! exd4 23 ♖c1. Now if Black tries 23...axb4 then White has 24 d e7+ (also good is 24 ♙xa8 ♙xa8 25 ♖xc4) 24...d h8 25 ♙xa8 ♙xa8 26 ♖xc4 d3 27 ♖xb4 ♙a1+ 28 d h2 h5 (White wins after both 28...d2 29 ♖b8+ ♙f8 30 ♖xf8+ d g7 31 ♖g8+ d h6 32 ♙f3 and the more complicated 28...d e5 29 f4! d2 30 ♙f3 ♖f1 31 fxe5 ♖xf3 32 d d4 ♖f2+ 33 d g1 ♖e2 34 exd6 ♖e1+ 35 d f2 d1 ♗ 36 ♖xd1 ♖xd1 37 d d5 ♖b1 38 d7 ♖b8 39 d e3) 29 ♙f3 d2 30 ♖b3! d1 ♗ 31 ♙xd1 ♖xd1 32 ♖f3 when he wins material.

22...dxe3 23 fxe3 axb4!

Now this works.



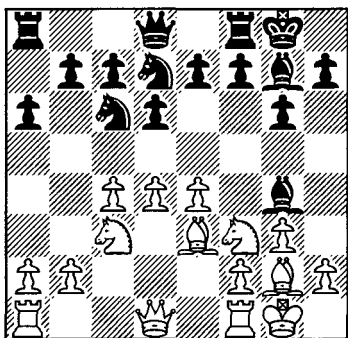
24 Rxa8 Qe2+ 25 Qf2 Qxc1 26 Rxf8+
Qxf8 27 Qxb4 Qb3

And Black had an extra pawn in
G.Pap-B.Martini, Budapest 2005.

C2) 9 Qe3

This is more popular. Black is often
compelled to capture on f3 anyway, so
White saves a tempo, develops and
guards the d4-square.

9...Qd7



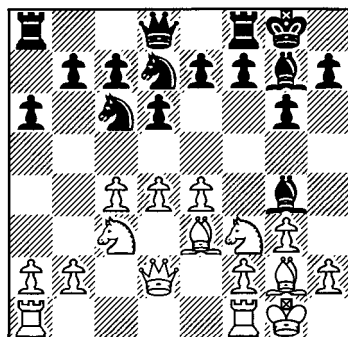
Now White has a distinct choice:

C21: 10 Qd2

C22: 10 Qe2

Instead 10 h3 Qxf3 11 Qxf3 trans-
poses to Line C1.

C21) 10 Qd2

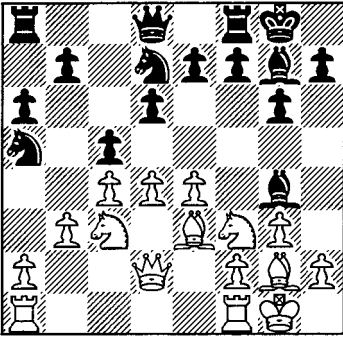


10...Qxf3

This is the most common move in
this position as it immediately takes
aim at the vulnerable d4-square, but
there are alternatives that can be con-
sidered:

a) 10...e5 is inaccurate: 11 d5 Qxf3
12 dxc6!? (this extra option is tempting;
instead 12 Qxf3 would transpose to the
main line) 12...Qxg2 13 cxb7 Qxf1 (simi-
lar is 13...Qb8 14 Qxg2 Qxb7 15 b3, as in
Z.Jasnikowski-A.Sznepik, Cetniewo 1991,
while 13...Qf3?! 14 Qg5! makes room
for White's queen to come to e3 and
14...f6 15 Qd5+ Qh8 16 bxa8 Qxa8 17
Qxa8 Qxa8 18 Qe3 just left White up
the exchange in O.Romanishin-
V.Tseshkovsky, Lvov 1978) 14 bxa8 Q
Qxa8 15 Rxf1 and White had an easy
edge in Z.Jasnikowski-L.Hazai, Espoo
1989.

b) 10...Qa5!? 11 b3 c5 is uncommon,
but playable. Now:



b1) 12 ♖ab1 ♙xf3 13 ♙xf3 ♘c6 14 ♘e2 cxd4 (instead 14...♙xd4!? is a trickier way of reaching the same position, with 15 ♘xd4 ♘de5 16 ♙g2 cxd4 17 ♙xd4 ♘d4 18 ♖xd4 ♘c6 19 ♖d2 e5, while the 14...e5 15 dxc5 dxc5 16 ♘c3 ♘d4 17 ♙g2 b5 of G.Tunik-A.Motylev, Samara 2000, could be met with 18 ♘d5 when White has a small advantage) 15 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 16 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♘e5 18 ♙g2 ♘c6 19 ♖d2 e5 secures the d4-square and equalizes.

b2) 12 ♖ac1 ♘c6 (or 12...♙xf3 13 ♙xf3 ♘c6 as in variation 'b1') 13 ♘e2 e5 (Black could play along the lines of 'b1' with 13...♙xf3 14 ♙xf3 cxd4 15 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 16 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♘e5) 14 dxc5 dxc5 15 h3 ♙xf3 16 ♙xf3 ♘d4 17 ♙g2 b5 with an unclear position in S.Mamedyarov-M.Al Modiahki, Dubai 2004.

b3) 12 ♘e1 looks to leave the g4-bishop out on a limb: 12...b5!? (more enterprising than 12...cxd4 13 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 14 ♖xd4 ♘c6 15 ♖d2 ♖a5 16 ♘c2 ♘f6 17 ♘e3 which would leave White with a slight edge according to Bologan)

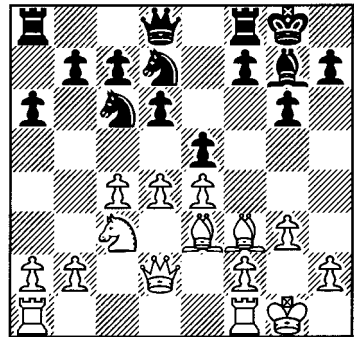
13 cxb5 (13 f3 cxd4 14 ♙xd4 ♙xd4+ 15 ♖xd4 ♙e6 16 cxb5 axb5 17 ♘xb5? fails to 17...♖b8! because Black wins after both 18 ♘c3 ♘xb3 and 18 ♘a3 ♘c6 19 ♖b2 ♖a7+) 13...axb5 14 h3 (not 14 ♘xb5? ♘xb3) was P.Motwani-E.Inarkiev, Gibraltar 2004. Now 14...cxd4 15 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 16 ♖xd4 ♙e6 gives Black counterplay: for example, 17 ♘xb5 ♖b8 18 ♘a3 ♘c6 19 ♖b2 ♘c5 with decent compensation for the pawn, and if 20 ♘ac2?! ♙c4!

b4) 12 dxc5!? and here:

b41) 12...♘xc5 13 h3 (13 ♘d4 ♘c6) 13...♙xf3 14 ♙xf3 ♘c6 is solid enough, though White should have a slight edge.

b42) 12...dxc5 13 ♘g5!? h6 (13...♘e5 14 ♘d5 e6 15 ♙xc5 exd5 16 ♙xf8 ♙xf8 17 exd5 is better for White; if 17...h6 18 ♘e4 ♘f3+ 19 ♙xf3 ♙xf3 20 ♖f4) 14 h3 ♙h5 15 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 16 g4 ♙xg4 17 hxg4 ♘e5 18 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 19 ♖ad1 ♖xd1 20 ♘xd1 b6 21 g5 ♖h7 with equality is a long variation given by Bologan.

11 ♙xf3 e5

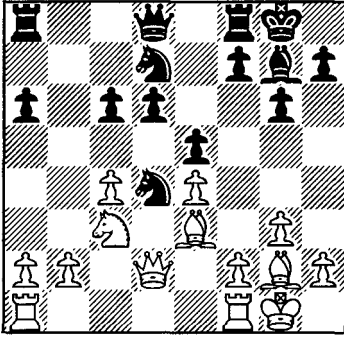


12 d5

As always 12 dxe5 dxe5 is harmless,

while 12 ♖e2? is met with the familiar trick 12...♗b6! 13 ♖ac1 (White also has problems after 13 ♖g5 ♖f6!) 13...♗f6!.

12...♗d4 13 ♖g2 c5 14 dxc6 bxc6



This position is the same as in Line C1, but here White has played ♗d2 instead of h3. This would seem to favour White, but in fact it makes little difference.

15 f4

This is a very direct approach; White wants to initiate play on the kingside. Alternatives:

a) 15 ♖e2 entices Black to change the pawn structure, but White wastes time: 15...c5 16 ♖c3 ♗b8 17 b3 a5 18 ♖ab1 ♗b6 (Black intends ...a4 with counterplay) 19 a4 ♖c8 20 ♖b5 ♖e7 21 f4 ♖h6! 22 ♖f2 f6 23 h4 ♖ec6 and the game was drawn in D.Solak-D.Popovic, Vrnjacka Banja 2006. Both sides have their squares.

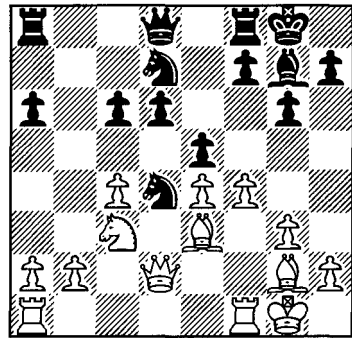
b) 15 b4 is the main alternative. White plays along the lines of Line C1. Black has:

b1) 15...♗c8 looks suspicious: 16 ♖fc1 ♗e7 (Black should at least try 16...c5) 17

♖ab1 ♗e6 18 ♗d3 ♗b6 19 ♖xd4! exd4 20 ♖e2 c5 21 ♖f4 ♗e5 22 ♗a3 cxb4 23 ♖xb4 ♖d7 24 ♖h3 ♖cd8 25 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 26 ♖e1 ♖h6 27 ♖d3 with a pleasant advantage for White in P.Nikolic-J.Polgar, Wijk aan Zee 2000.

b2) 15...c5 16 ♖ab1 (if 16 a3 ♗b6, but White could try 16 bxc5!? ♖xc5 17 ♖ab1) 16...cxb4 17 ♖xb4 a5 18 ♖b7 ♖c8 19 ♖d5 ♖xc4 20 ♖xd7 ♗xd7 21 ♗b6 ♗c6 22 ♖xc4 ♗xc4 23 ♗xa5 was G.Tunik-N.Nikolaev, 5t Petersburg 2000. Here 23...♖c8 or 23...♖b8 would keep the position level.

b3) 15...♗b6!? 16 ♗d3 ♗d7! 17 ♖e2 (not 17 c5? dxc5 18 bxc5?? ♖f3+, while 17 ♖fd1 ♗e6 18 ♖f1 would be the same position as note 'b' to Black's 15th move in Line C1, except here White has not play h2-h3) 17...c5 18 a3 ♖ab8 19 ♖ab1 ♖fc8 20 ♖fc1 ♗e6 with equal chances, as given by Bologan.



15...♖b8

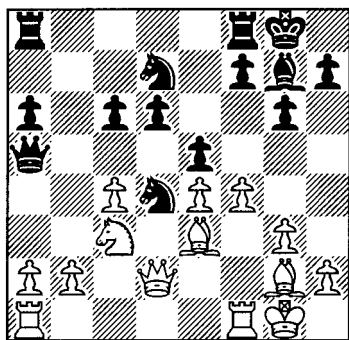
This is a logical move, but it is not the only possibility. Others:

a) 15...♗b6 16 ♗d3!? ♗e7 17 ♖f2 c5 18 f5 was good for White in 5.5afin-

KShashikant, New Delhi 2009, as Black has trouble creating counterplay.

b) 15...a5 16 b3 ♖b6 17 ♗d3 c5 (if 17...a4 18 b4) 18 ♙ab1 a4?! (Black should have tried 18...exf4!? 19 gxf4 ♙e8 20 ♖b5 ♖xb5 21 cxb5 ♗e7 22 a4 ♙ad8 with unclear play) 19 b4 cxb4 20 ♙xb4 ♖d7 21 ♗d2 a3 22 ♖b5 ♗a5 23 ♖xd4 exd4 24 ♖xd6 ♙ab8 25 ♙fb1 ♖c5 26 e5 ♙b6 was G.Kacheishvili-A.Fedorov, Leon 2001. Now 27 ♖b5 d3 28 ♖xa3! ♖a6 29 ♙b2! would make Black's play look too speculative.

c) 15...♗a5!? is aggressive. The queen may be missed on the kingside, but White has to watch out for a few tricks:



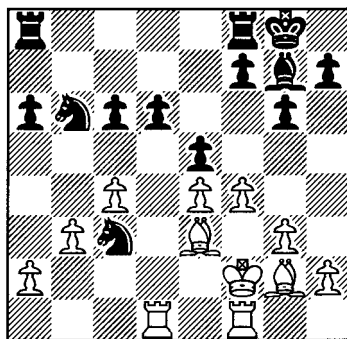
c1) 16 ♙f2? runs into 16...♖b3.

c2) 16 f5 ♗b4! 17 ♖h3 (if 17 b3 ♗xc3) 17...♙ad8 when White has trouble with his queenside pawns. After 18 f6 ♖xf6 19 ♖g5 ♖h5 20 ♖xd8 ♙xd8 Black's grip on the dark squares gave him excellent compensation for the exchange in S.Muesing-M.Nedochetov, Pardubice 2006.

c3) 16 ♙ac1 ♙ab8 and now Atalik points out that 17 f5 would be met by

17...♗c5 18 b3 ♖h6! with the idea 19 ♖xh6? ♖f3+.

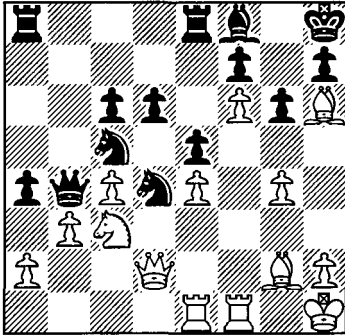
c4) 16 ♙ad1 ♖b6 (also possible is 16...♗b4 17 ♖d5 ♗xd2 18 ♖e7+ ♖h8 19 ♙xd2 c5, but the text is more ambitious) 17 b3 (this looks like it just blunders a piece, but the loose knight on b6 keeps White in the game; instead the move order 17 ♗d3 ♗b4 18 b3 ♗xc3 would simply transpose) 17...♗xc3 18 ♗xc3 ♖e2+ 19 ♖f2 ♖xc3.



Now instead of 20 ♙d3? ♖d7! which was simply winning for Black in S.Stantic-S.Atalik, Nova Gorica 1999, Atalik gives 20 ♖xb6 ♖xd1+ 21 ♙xd1 ♙fb8 (not 21...a5 22 ♙xd6 ♙fc8 23 ♖h3) 22 ♖c7 ♙b7 23 ♖xd6 ♙d8 24 c5 with some compensation for the exchange.

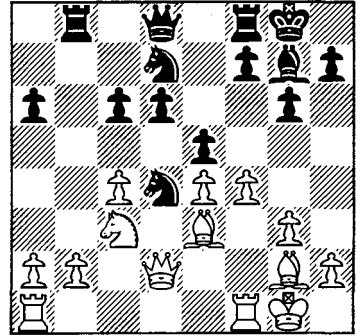
c5) 16 ♖h1 avoids Black's tactical tricks. After 16...♗b4 (Black cannot waste time with 16...♙fb8, because of 17 f5 ♗d8 18 ♙f2 ♖f6 19 h3 ♖d7?! 20 ♙af1 when White had a strong attack brewing in Z.Jasnikowski-B.Socko, Zakopane 2000) 17 b3 a5 18 f5 ♙fe8 19 ♙ac1 ♖c5 (this allows White's next move, but Black needed the knight to help break

through on the queenside) 20 f6 ♖f8 21 ♗h6 ♜h8 22 ♖ce1 a4 23 g4 White's attack looks dangerous, but Black can cover everything and his counterplay is very quick on the queenside.



c53) 23...♗de6 and here 24 ♖f3 (intending ♖h3; instead 24 ♗xa4 ♜xd2 25 ♗xd2 ♗xa4 26 bxa4 ♖xa4 is good for Black) 24...g5!? is again possible.

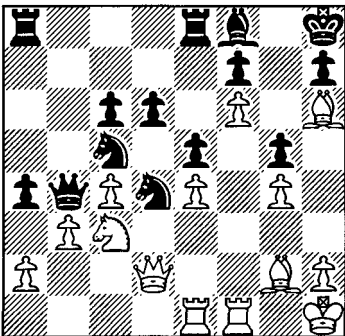
Returning to 15...♖b8:



Some possibilities:

c51) 23...♗ce6? 24 ♗xa4 ♜xd2 25 ♗xd2 left White a pawn up, M.Lominishvili-S.Mamedyarov, Batumi 2001.

c52) 23...g5! was indicated by Bologan without analysis.



This looks quite good: for example, 24 ♗xg5 (24 ♜xg5 ♗ce6 25 ♗g7+ is met with the cold-blooded 25...♗g8!) 24...axb3 25 axb3 ♗cxb3 26 ♜d3 ♗c5 27 ♜h3 ♜xc4 looks good for Black.

16 ♖f2

This is a typical move. White overprotects the b2-pawn and prepares to double rooks on the f-file. A couple of other moves have also been tried:

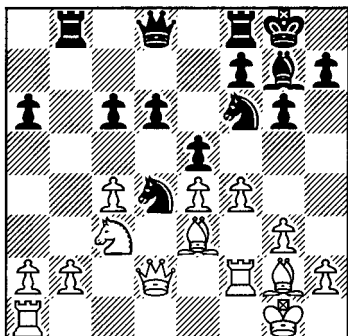
a) 16 ♖ac1 a5 (16...♗f6!?) 17 f5 ♜b6 18 ♖f2 ♗f6?! (better is 18...♜b4 19 b3 ♖b7, as in variation 'b') 19 ♖cf1 ♜d8 20 ♗h6 ♖e8 21 fxf6 fxf6 22 ♗h3 with a strong initiative in S.Mamedyarov-R.Babaev, Baku 2001. Mamedyarov seems to like this line with both colours.

b) 16 f5 ♜b6 17 ♖f2 ♜b4 18 b3 a5 19 ♖af1 ♖b7! 20 ♜h1 (if 20 f6 ♗xf6! 21 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 22 ♖xf6 ♜xc3) 20...♖fb8 (also possible is 20...♖e8!?) 21 f6 ♗f8 22 ♗h6?! was M.Huster-R.Sukharisingh, German League 1999. Now 22...♗xh6 23 ♜xh6 ♗xf6! would be good for Black.

16...♗f6!?

Black manages to take advantage of White's omission of h2-h3. Instead

16...♖c5 17 ♖af1 f5?! 18 exf5 gxf5 19 fxe5 dxe5 20 ♗xc6! was S.Mamedyarov-R.Kasimdzhanov, Moscow (blitz) 2007.



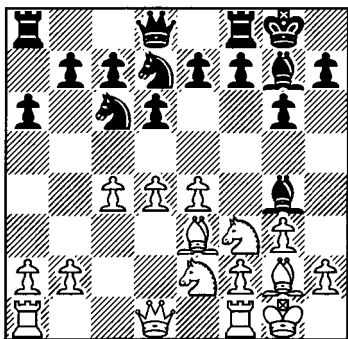
17 ♗h3

Instead 17 h3 ♖h5! gives Black good counterplay after 18 fxe5 dxe5 or 18 ♖h2 exf4! 19 gxf4 c5.

17...h5! 18 ♖e1 ♖g4 19 ♗xg4 hxg4 20 ♗xd4 exd4 21 ♖d1 ♖b6 22 b3 ♖fe8 23 ♖d3

Now instead of 23...♖b7 24 ♖fe2 ♖be7 25 ♖f2! as in Cao Sang-B.Roselli Mailhe, Moscow Olympiad 1994, 23...a5!? would give Black good play.

C22) 10 ♖e2



This is a completely different approach. White secures the d4-square, but this move is a bit awkward and Black is able to create counterplay.

10...♖a5! 11 ♖c1

This is almost always played, but White can also play a second knight retreat with 11 ♖d2!?. After 11...c5 (11...♗xe2 12 ♖xe2 c5 with the idea of ...♖c6 is also possible) 12 f3 cxd4 13 ♖xd4 e5!? (Black should avoid 13...♗e6 14 ♖xe6 fxe6 15 ♗h3, while 13...♗xd4 14 ♗xd4 ♗e6 15 b3 ♖c6 seems suspicious) 14 ♖c2 ♗e6 15 b3 ♖c6 and in this unclear position a draw was agreed in A.Mikhailchishin-M.Manik, Leipzig 2002.

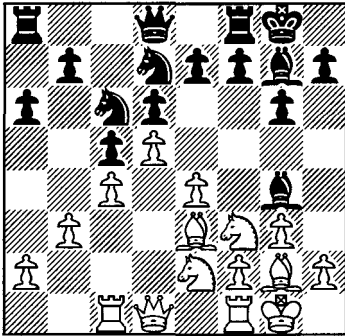
11...c5 12 b3

Black has no problems after 12 h3 ♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 ♖c6 (this is ambitious, but a solid alternative can be found in 13...♖c8 14 b3 cxd4 15 ♖xd4 ♖c6, M.Kursova-I.Khairullin, St Petersburg 2004) 14 d5 ♖ce5 (worse is 14...♖a5 15 b3 b5 16 ♖f4 ♖b8 17 ♗d2 when the a5-knight remained out of play in R.Dautov-M.Schoene, German League 2009) 15 ♗g2 b5 16 b3 (Black also has good play after 16 cxb5 axb5 17 b3 c4) 16...bxc4 and now 17 bxc4 would lose a pawn to 17...♖b6.

12...♖c6

Instead 12...♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 ♖c6 (worse is 13...cxd4 14 ♖xd4 ♖c6 15 ♖xc6 bxc6 16 c5! dxc5 17 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 18 ♖xc5 ♖b6 19 ♖c2 and White had a clear advantage in L.Gyorkos-M.Zufic, Trieste 2005) 14 d5 ♖b4 transposes back into the main line.

13 d5



13...d5!

This odd-looking move is not only tactically justified, it is necessary. Instead 13...dce5?! 14 e1! leaves Black's minor pieces looking for a retreat, while 13...exf3 14 exf3 dce5 15 g2 b5 16 f4 dg4 17 d2 gives White a space advantage and the bishop-pair.

14 a3

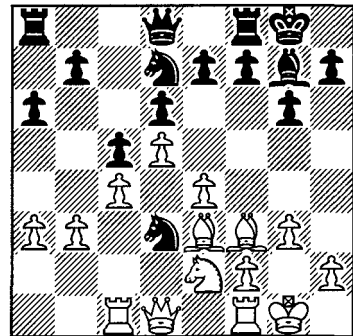
White puts the questions to Black's knight immediately. Instead 14 d2 d3 (Black could also play 14...exf3 15 exf3 de5 16 g2 wa5 17 c3 b5 when he has some initiative and it is not easy to exploit the position of the b4-knight) 15 ccd1 (Black has counterplay after 15 c2c2 b5, while 15 wxd3 exf3 16 exf3 de5 is similar to the main line) 15...b5 16 cxb5 exf3 (White holds on to the extra pawn after 16...axb5 17 wxd3 exf3 18 exf3 de5 19 wxb5 dxf3+ 20 g2 de5 21 dc1, although Black has some Benko-like counterplay) 17 exf3 d3e5 18 g2 axb5 19 h3 and now instead of the strange 19...db8?! 20 f4 ded7 21 dc1 of M.Lomineishvili-

E.Paehtz, German League 2002, Black could have played 19...db6 20 f4 ded7 or even the immediate 19...c4!?

14...exf3

Black can also play the immediate 14...d3 15 c2 (White should probably transpose to the main line with 15 wxd3 exf3 16 exf3 de5 17 c2) 15...b5 16 de1 de1 17 wxe1 bxc4 18 bxc4 exe2 19 wxe2 wa5 20 eh3 db6 21 wd3 ab8 22 dd2 wa4 23 db1 dd7 and Black was taking over in A.Hallmark-J.Penrose, York 1959.

15 exf3 d3



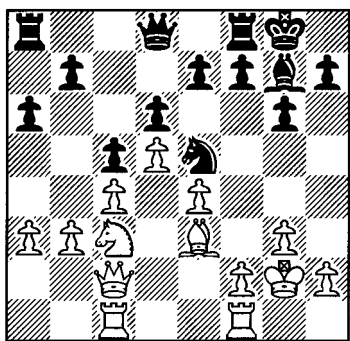
This is the point of Black's play. The knight is not trapped after all.

16 wxd3

White acquiesces to exchanges. Instead 16 c2 still hopes to bother Black's wandering knight when 16...b5 17 d3 (or 17 g2 bxc4 18 bxc4 db2 19 wd2 de5 20 ffc1 db8 21 f4 when Bologan gives 21...dg4 with counterplay, while 21...ded3!? is possible too) 17...bxc4 18 bxc4 db2! (if 18...d3e5 19 ee2 db6 20 db1! Black will be pushed back after all) 19 bxb2 exc3 20 bb7 db8 21 wb3 (af-

Panno Variation: White's Other 8th Moves

ter 21 ♖a7 Black can play 21...♖a8 or sacrifice a pawn for the c5-square with 21...♗d4 as indicated by Bologan) 21...♞a5 22 ♗h6 ♗g7 23 ♗g5 ♜fe8 24 ♜g2 h6 25 ♗e3 ♘b6 26 ♝xb8 ♝xb8 27 ♞b1 ♘d7 28 ♞d3 ♝xb1 29 ♞xb1 was B.Avrkh-V.Bologan, Istanbul 2003. Here Gallagher indicates 29...♞xa3 30 ♞b7 ♘e5 31 ♞xe7 ♗f8! and Black is doing very well.
16...♗e5 17 ♞c2 ♘xf3+ 18 ♖g2 ♘e5 19 ♘c3

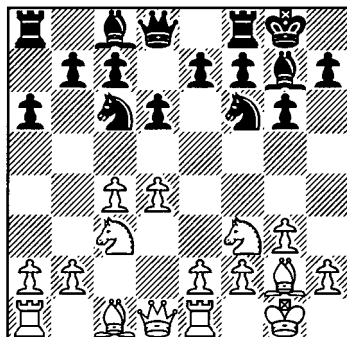


Now 19...♘g4?! 20 ♗d2 e6 21 h3 ♘f6 22 ♞d3! gave White an edge in R.Dautov-V.Bologan, Mainz (rapid) 2004. Instead Bologan suggests 19...♘d7 20 f4 ♞b8, but perhaps White has a tiny edge after 21 a4 because of his extra space. Another, more risky idea is 20...b5!? with the idea of 21 cxb5 ♗xc3 22 ♞xc3 axb5.

D) 8 ♞e1

This move looks a little odd at first, considering White could play 8 e4 straightway. In fact White's idea is to play on the queenside with ♞b1 and b4, but the immediate 8 ♞b1 would simply

be met by 8...♗f5. Therefore White brings the rook to e1 first, in order to retain the possibility of playing e4.



8...♞b8

Having the rook on b8 is useful in several structures. Black continues with his plan, at least for the time being. Instead 8...♗d7 would be well met by 9 e4 after all, as 9...e5 10 d5 ♘d4 (11...♘e7 is possible, but this type of position generally favours White) 11 ♘xd4 exd4 and now instead of 12 ♞xd4 ♘xe4! with the idea of 13 ♞xe4 ♞e8, White can play 12 ♘e2! winning the d4-pawn.

Another possibility is the flexible 8...♞e8, which is Bologan's preference. Some possibilities:

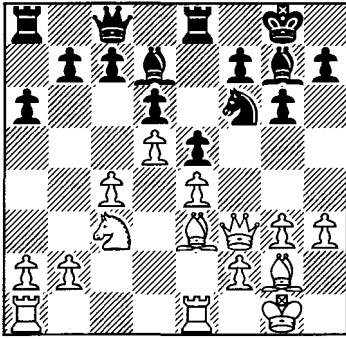
a) 9 e4 could be met by 9...e5 10 d5 ♘d4 or simply 9...♗g4.

b) 9 d5 ♘a5 leads to positions similar to the Yugoslav Variation after 10 ♞d3 c5 or 10 ♘d2 c5.

c) 9 ♞b1 e5 10 d5 (10 dxe5 dxe5 11 ♞xd8 ♞xd8 12 ♗g5 ♗e6 13 ♘d2 h6 14 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 is not a problem for Black) 10...♘d4 11 ♘d2 ♗f5 12 ♘de4 ♘xe4 13 ♘xe4 gave White a slight edge in

A.Maric-K.Kachiani Gersinska, Antalya 2002, as Black's knight will be booted from the d4-square.

d) 9 h3 ♖d7 10 e4 e5 11 d5 (instead 11 ♖e3 exd4 12 ♗xd4 and 11 dxe5 dxe5 transpose to Lines B2 and B31 respectively from Chapter 3) 11...♗d4 12 ♖e3 ♗xf3+ 13 ♗xf3 ♗c8.

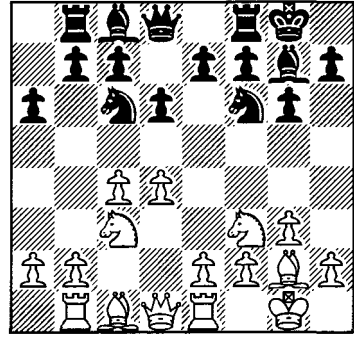


This is similar to the note to White's 11th move in Line B1 of Chapter 3, but here ♖e1 and ...♗e8 are thrown in. After 14 g4 (not 14 ♖h2 ♗g4+) 14...h5 15 g5 ♗h7 16 ♗g3 ♗d8 17 ♖f1 (after 17 ♖d2 ♗e7 18 ♖ac1 ♖f8 19 ♖h1 f6 Black had good counterplay in M.Ferreiro Calvo-I.Cheparinov, Marin 2001) 17...f6 18 gxf6 ♗xf6 19 h4 ♖f8 (with the idea of ...♖e7) 20 f4 ♖h6! 21 ♖ae1 ♖g4 22 f5 ♖xe3+ 23 ♖xe3 ♖h8 Black had good play in P.Tregubov-R.Antoniewski, Koszalin 1999.

9 ♖b1

Black's rook move is more useful than White's after 9 e4 ♖g4 10 h3 (or 10 ♖e3 ♗d7 11 ♗d2 e5 12 d5 ♖xf3 13 ♖xf3 ♗d4 14 ♖g2 c5 15 dxc6 bxc6) 10...♖xf3 11 ♖xf3 ♗d7 (or 11...e5 12 d5

♗d4 13 ♖g2 c5) 12 ♖e3 e5 13 d5 ♗d4 14 ♖g2 c5 15 dxc6 bxc6 and Black has a good version of the positions from Line C.



Black has a very broad choice here, but we will focus on:

D1: 9...♖f5

D2: 9...♗a5

Other moves:

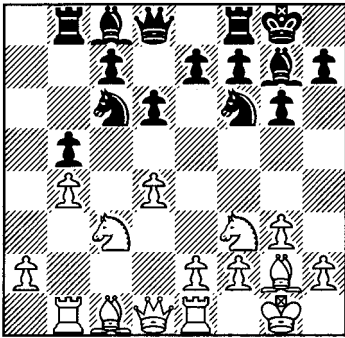
a) 9...♖e8 10 d5 ♗a5 again leads to a Yugoslav position with some extra rook moves thrown in. One recent example: 11 ♗d3 c5 12 e4 ♗d7 (Black could try 12...b5 13 cxb5 c4) 13 b3 with some advantage to White in P.Svidler-E.Inarkiev, Baku 2008. Black's position is not as dynamic as it is in the main lines of Chapter 1.

b) 9...♖d7 again looks too slow after 10 e4! e5 11 d5 ♗e7 12 c5 ♗e8 13 b4 h6 14 a4 f5 15 ♖a3 and White's play was faster in A.Karpov-V.Bologan, Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2000.

c) 9...e5 10 d5 (the position was level after 10 dxe5 dxe5 11 ♗xd8 ♖xd8 12 b4

♙f5 13 e4 ♙g4 14 ♘d5 ♙xf3 15 ♙xf3 ♘d4 16 ♙d1 c6 17 ♘b6 ♘d7 in B.Abramovic-V.Nevednichy, Budva 2002) 10...♘d4! (10...♘e7 11 e4 is again better for White, as 11...b5 12 cxb5 axb5 13 b4 hardly helps Black's cause) 11 ♘xd4 (or 11 ♘d2 ♙f5) 11...exd4 12 ♚xd4 ♙f5 13 ♚a1 ♘e4 14 ♚e3 ♘xc3 15 bxc3 b5!? gives Black reasonable play for the pawn.

d) 9...b5 allows White to execute his main idea after 10 cxb5 axb5 11 b4.



Here Black has tried:

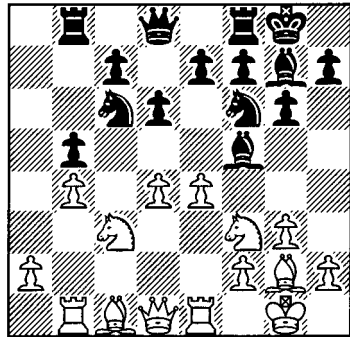
d1) 11...♙d7 12 d5 ♘a7 13 ♘d4 ♘g4 14 e3 ♘e5 15 f4 ♘c4 16 ♚d3 with the idea of a4 looks better for White.

d2) 11...e6 12 e4 ♘e7 13 ♘d2 c5?! (better is 13...♘d7 14 ♘b3 c6 with the idea of ...♘b6, but White is still a little better here) 14 bxc5 dxc5 15 dxc5 ♘d7 16 ♘xb5 ♘xc5 17 ♘c4 was better for White in A.Karpov-A.Shirov, Dos Hermanas 1997, and 17 ♙a3!? looks even stronger: for example, 17...♘d3 18 ♚e3 ♙a6 19 ♙f1! ♙xb5 20 ♙xd3 ♙xd3 21 ♚xb8 ♚xb8 22 ♚xd3.

d3) 11...e5 12 dxe5 (12 d5 ♘e7 13 e4

♙d7 with the idea of ...c6 gives Black counterplay) 12...dxe5 13 ♙e3 ♙f5 14 ♚c1 ♚e8 (if 14...♘xb4 15 ♙c5) 15 ♙c5 e4 (after 15...♙d8 16 ♚b3 e4, as in D.Stellwagen-S.Mamedyarov, Baku 2002, Bologan points out that 17 ♘xb5 exf3 18 exf3 gives White a clear advantage) 16 ♘h4 ♙d8 17 ♚c2 (a better try is 17 ♚b3 ♘d4 18 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 19 ♘xf5 gxf5 20 ♙ed1 ♙xd1+ 21 ♘xd1!) 17...♘d4 18 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 19 ♘xf5 gxf5 20 a3 was Y.Yagiz-M.Yilmazyerli, Safranbolu 2009. Now 20...♚c4 21 ♚b3 ♚c6 would give Black reasonable play.

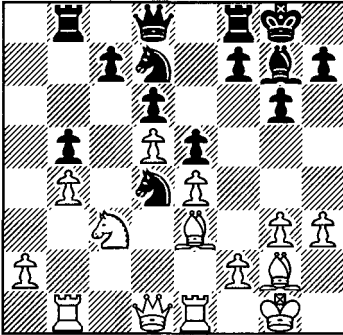
d4) 11...♙f5 12 e4 and now:



d41) 12...♘xe4 13 ♚xe4 d5 14 ♚e2 (worse is 14 ♘e5 ♘xe5 15 ♚xe5 ♙xe5 16 dxe5 ♙xb1 17 ♘xb1 e6 18 ♘d2 c5 19 bxc5 ♚a5 as indicated by Shirov) 14...♙xb1 15 ♘xb1 ♘xb4 was given as better for Black by Shirov, but I do not like it. After 16 ♙f4 ♚b7 17 h4 ♚e8 18 h5 White had the initiative in N.Straub-V.Werner, Dresden 1999.

d42) 12...♙g4 13 h3 ♙xf3 14 ♙xf3 e5 15 d5 ♘d4 16 ♙e3 (perhaps more accurate is 16 ♙g2 ♘d7 17 ♙e3) 16...♘d7

(16...♖xf3+ 17 ♗xf3 ♕d7 18 ♗e2 f5 19 ♖xb5 f4 20 ♔d2 was given by Shirov, but perhaps Black could have tried 17...♗d7 18 ♖g2 ♕h5) 17 ♔g2 (instead Shirov gave 17 ♔e2 f5 18 exf5 ♖xe2+ 19 ♗xe2 gxf5 as unclear, but 20 ♖xb5 f4 21 ♔d2 looks good for White) and now:



d421) 17...♖b6 18 ♔f1 (18 ♔xd4 exd4 19 ♖xb5 ♖xd5 20 exd5 ♗xb5 21 a4 also looks good) 18...f5 19 ♖xb5 f4 20 ♔xd4 exd4 21 g4 and White had the upper hand in I.Stohl-O.Gladyszev, Lisbon 2001.

d422) 17...♗f6 18 ♖c1 ♗b7 19 h4 was V.Ivanchuk-A.Shirov, Monte Carlo (rapid) 1995. Now 19...♗e7 20 ♔xd4 exd4 21 ♖e2 ♗a8 would give Black some counterplay, even though White can still probably keep some advantage with 22 ♖xd4 ♗xa2 23 ♖c6.

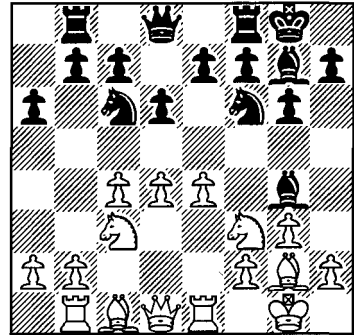
D1) 9...♔f5!?

Black plays this anyway in order to reach a familiar structure.

10 e4 ♔g4

Compared to Line C, Black has the extra move ...♗b8 and White has played

two extra moves with ♗e1 and ♗b1. It would seem that this should favour White, but while Black's rook move will almost always prove to be useful, it is not clear that either of White's extra moves will help him, especially ♗e1. For one thing, the plans with f2-f4 that we saw in Line C21 are not available to White.

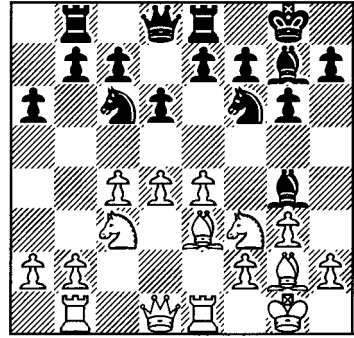
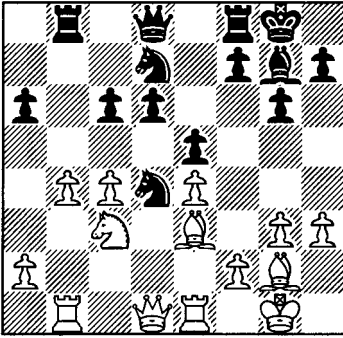


11 ♔e3

Of course White can also play 11 h3 ♔xf3 12 ♔xf3 ♕d7 13 ♔e3 e5 and now:

a) 14 ♖e2 ♗f6 (14...exd4 15 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 16 ♔xd4 ♔xd4 17 ♗xd4 ♗e8 is also playable if a bit dull) 15 ♔g4 ♖b6! (enterprising, but it is simpler to play 15...exd4 16 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 17 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 18 ♔xd4 ♔xd4 19 ♔xd7 ♗bd8) 16 d5 ♖d4 17 ♗c1 ♖f3+ 18 ♔xf3 ♗xf3 19 ♔xb6 cxb6 20 ♖c3 ♗bc8 21 ♖a4! b5 22 ♖b6 ♗c7 23 ♗d1 was P.Skatchkov-A.Korobov, Cappelle la Grande 2004. Now Black's best is probably 23...♗xd1 24 ♗bx1 ♔h6! 25 cxb5 axb5 26 ♗e2 f5 with equal chances.

b) 14 d5 ♖d4 15 ♔g2 c5 16 dxc6 bxc6 17 b4 gives a familiar structure.



The additional rook moves do no harm to Black's chances: 17...c5 18 a3 (the alternative 18 b5 axb5 19 cxb5 ♖a5 20 ♙d2 c4!? is unclear according to Gavrikov) 18...♟b6 19 ♙f1 (19 ♖d3 is safer) 19...f5! (naturally Black fights for the initiative) 20 ♙xd4 exd4 21 ♟d5 fxe4 22 ♜xe4 ♟xd5 23 cxd5 ♖g5 24 ♖c2 d3!? 25 ♖xd3 ♙d4 26 ♜e2 (or 26 ♜xd4 cxd4 27 ♖xd4 ♜f3 with unclear play) 26...♜b7 27 ♙g2 (not 27 h4 ♖xd5 28 ♙g2?? ♙xf2+) 27...♜bf7 28 ♜f1 ♜f3! 29 ♖e4 ♖xg3 (29...♜xg3 30 ♙h1 ♜xa3 31 ♖e6+ ♜f7 32 ♖xd6 is not so clear) 30 ♖xd4 ♖xg2+ 31 ♙xg2 cxd4 32 ♜d2 ♜xa3 33 ♜xd4 ♜a2 34 ♙g3 ♙g7 35 h4 ♜b2 (better is the alternative 35...♜a3+ 36 f3 ♜f5 when Black can still hope to press) 36 f3 ♜b3 37 ♙g2 ½-½ V.Gavrikov-A.Shchekachev, St Ingbert 1997.

11...♟d7

This is the normal move, but Black has an alternative in 11...♜e8!? with which he keeps some pressure on the e4-pawn to discourage White's ♟e2 plans.

White has:

a) 12 h3 ♙xf3 13 ♙xf3 e5 14 d5 ♟d4 15 ♙g2 c5 16 dxc6 bxc6 17 b4 ♟d7 with a typical position similar to those in Line C.

b) 12 ♖d2 ♙xf3 13 ♙xf3 e5 14 d5 ♟d4 15 ♙g2 c5 16 b4 (after 16 dxc6 bxc6 17 b4 Black can try to exploit the particular features of the position with 17...♟g4!?) 16...♟d7 (or 16...b6) 17 bxc5 ♟xc5 (instead 17...dxc5 was played in V.Burlov-A.Grigoriadis, Moscow 2007, and here White would have some advantage after the simple 18 a4) 18 ♟e2 ♟xe2+ 19 ♜xe2 ♖c7 gives Black a very solid position.

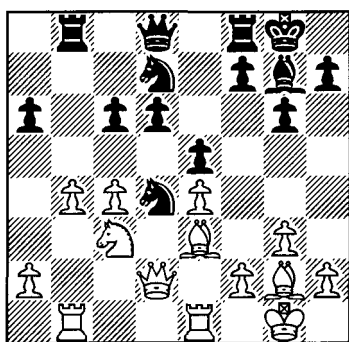
c) 12 ♖c2 ♙xf3 13 ♙xf3 e5 14 d5 ♟d4 15 ♙xd4 exd4 16 ♟e2 ♟d7 17 ♜bd1 and now instead of 17...♟c5? 18 ♟xd4 ♖e7 (after 18...♙xd4 19 ♜xd4 ♖f6 White has 20 ♖d1) 19 ♟b3 ♟xb3 20 ♖xb3 when White simply had an extra pawn in M.Stangl-K.Kachiani Gersinska, German League 1998, Black should have played 17...♟e5! 18 ♟xd4 (18 ♙g2? d3) 18...c5 19 dxc6 bxc6 20 ♙g2 c5 21 ♟b3 (21 ♟f3 ♜xb2!) 21...a5 with ideas like

...a4 and ...c6-d4 (or b4). Black has good counterplay.

d) 12 ♖d3!? e5 13 d5 ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 ♘d4 15 ♗xd4! (if 15 ♗g2 c5) 15...exd4 16 ♘e2 (16 ♗xd4 ♘xe4) 16...♘d7 17 ♘xd4 ♘e5 18 ♗c2? (much better is 18 ♗e2 c5 19 dxc6 bxc6 20 ♗g2 when Black would still have to prove sufficient compensation for the pawn) 18...c5 19 dxc6 ♗b6! 20 ♖ed1 ♗xd4! 21 ♖xd4 ♘xf3+ 22 ♔g2 ♘xd4 23 ♖d3 bxc6 and Black had too much material for the queen in S.Ulak-B.Socko, Krynica 1998.

12 ♘e2

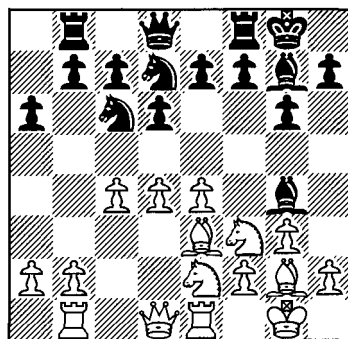
Instead 12 h3 ♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 e5 would just transpose to variation 'a' to White's 11th move, above, but 12 ♖d2 is possible as well. After 12...e5 13 d5 ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 ♘d4 15 ♗g2 c5 16 dxc6 bxc6 17 b4 (if 17 ♘e2 c5 18 ♘c3 ♘b6 19 b3 a5, while 17 ♗xd4 exd4 18 ♘e2 c5 was pleasant for Black in H.Gretarsson-M.Van Delft, Reykjavik 2006), and now:



a) 17...a5 18 b5 ♘b6 19 ♖d3 ♖d7 20 ♗xd4 exd4 21 ♘e2 d5? 22 exd5 cxd5 23 c5 was a disaster for Black in A.Zaremba-M.Lee, US Online League

2009, but 21...c5 would have been level.

b) 17...♘b6 18 ♖d3 ♗c8!? 19 c5 (more normal would be 19 ♖ed1 ♗e6 20 ♗f1) 19...dxc5 20 bxc5 ♘d7 21 ♖xb8 ♗xb8 22 ♖b1?! (White had to play 22 ♖c4) 22...♘xc5 23 ♖xb8 ♘xd3 24 ♖b7 ♘c5 25 ♖a7 ♗f6!? (25...♖b8) 26 ♗f1 ♗d8 27 ♗c4 (not 27 ♗xa6 ♗b6) 27...♗b6 28 ♖e7 ♗d8 29 ♖a7 ♗b6 30 ♖e7 ♔g7! (with the idea of ...♔f6 trapping the rook) 31 h4 (if 31 ♖xe5 ♘f3+) 31...h6 and Black won material in B.Bogosavljevic-J.Skoberne, Subotica 2008.



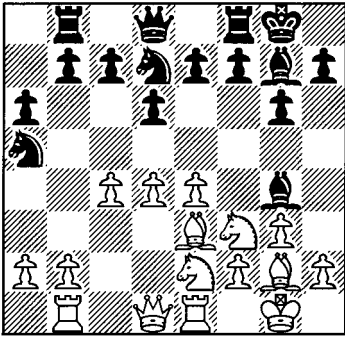
12...♘a5!?

Black sticks to the recipe we saw in Line C22. Instead 12...e5 13 d5 ♘e7 14 ♖d2 (also good is 14 ♘d2 ♗xe2 15 ♗xe2 f5 16 f3) 14...♗xf3 15 ♗xf3 f5 leaves White with an edge after 16 ♗g2 (not 16 ♘c3? f4! with the idea 17 gxf4 exf4 18 ♗xf4 g5), and here:

a) 16...fxe4 17 ♘c3 ♘f6 18 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 19 ♗xe4 ♘f5 20 b4 ♖f7 21 a4 ♗e7 22 a5 ♖f8 23 b5 ♘xe3 24 ♗xe3 ♗h6 25 ♗e2 was good for White in D.Vucenovic-K.Klundt, Dresden 2004.

b) 16...♘f6 17 ♗g5 ♖d7 (or 17...♘xe4

18 ♖xe4 fxe4 19 ♗xe7 ♜xe7 20 ♖c3) 18 ♖c3 and White was slightly better in A.Karpov-A.Shirov, Monte Carlo (rapid) 1997.



13 b3

Or 13 ♖d2 and now:

a) 13...♗xe2 14 ♜xe2 c5 (after 14...♖c6 15 ♖b3 e5 16 d5 ♖d4 17 ♗xd4 exd4 18 ♜bd1 White won a pawn in E.Pigusov-Al Sayed, Dubai 2001, because 18...c5 19 dxc6 bxc6 20 ♖xd4 ♜b6 can be met with 21 ♜d2!) 15 d5 b5 16 b3 was better for White in C.Foisor-M.Bijaoui, Grenoble 2006, as the a5-knight is not well placed.

b) 13...c5 and then:

b1) 14 d5 ♖e5 15 h3 (not 15 f3? ♖axc4) 15...♗c8 (if 15...♗d7 16 ♜c2 b5 17 b3 with the idea of f4) 16 ♜c2 b5 17 b3 ♜e8 intending ...e6 gives Black counterplay.

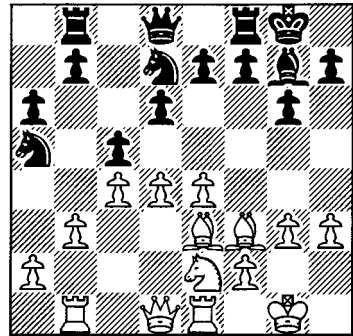
b2) 14 f3 cxd4 15 ♖xd4 e5 (15...♗xd4 16 ♗xd4 ♗e6 looks a little drastic even if White is not so well coordinated to take advantage of the dark squares) 16 ♖c2 (a more interesting try is 16 ♖f5!? ♗xf5 17 exf5 when 17...gxf5 18 ♜c2 ♜f6

19 ♗h3 is bad, but Black can prefer 17...♖c6 with unclear play) 16...♗e6 17 ♗f1 ♖c6 was fairly level in D.Lapienis-V.Baklan, Kemer 2007.

13...c5 14 h3

If 14 d5 ♗xf3 15 ♗xf3 b5 (Stohl) with the idea of ...bxc4 and ...♖e5 looks very comfortable for Black.

14...♗xf3 15 ♗xf3



Here Black has a couple of plans:

a) 15...cxd4 16 ♖xd4 ♖c6 17 ♗g2 ♖xd4 18 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 19 ♜xd4 ♜a5 20 ♜e2 ♜fc8 was level in T.Kostiuk-N.Nikolaev, Peterhof 2005.

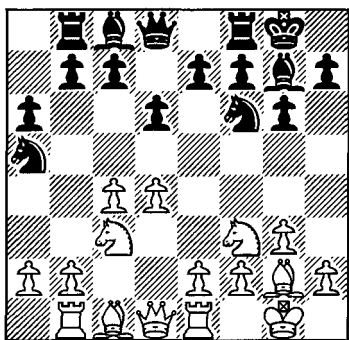
b) 15...♖c6 16 d5 and then:

b1) 16...♖a5 17 ♗g2?! b5 gave Black good play in A.Livner-J.Eriksson, Stockholm 2005, but 17 ♖f4 (to allow ♗e2, protecting the c4-pawn) 17...b5 18 ♜c2 would allow White to retain an edge.

b2) 16...♖b4!? 17 ♜d2 (17 a3 ♖d3 exploits the rook on e1!) 17...b5 with unclear play.

D2) 9...♖a5!?

This is an interesting way to disrupt White's plans.



10 ♖a4

This move looks active and it has been played the most frequently, but it is not clear that it is best. Other tries:

a) 10 ♖d2 and here:

a1) 10...c5 11 dxc5 (or 11 d5 b5 12 cxb5 axb5 13 b4 cxb4 14 ♖xb4 ♗d7 with counterplay reminiscent of some lines of Chapter 1) 11...dxc5 12 ♖b3 ♖xc4 13 ♖xc5 was J.Borges Mateos-C.Mena Crespo, Havana 2006. Here 13...♗c7 14 ♖d3 ♖d8 would be level, if not terribly interesting.

a2) 10...♗f5!? 11 e4 ♗g4 12 f3 ♗d7 13 b4 ♖c6 (or 13...♖h5!?) 14 ♖f1 (not a happy square, but 14 ♖b3 allows 14...♖xb4) 14...e5 with counterplay.

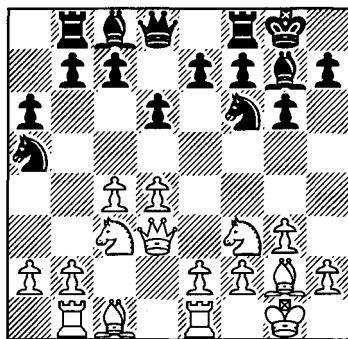
b) 10 b3 b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 b4 (White loses a tempo; instead 12 e4 b4 13 ♖a4 ♗d7 14 ♖b2 d5!? 15 e5 ♖e4 16 ♗d2 c5 gives Black good play) 12...♖c4 13 a4 (if 13 e4 c6 or 13 d5 e6 with counterplay) 13...bxa4 14 ♗xa4 ♖d7! and here:

b1) 15 e4 ♖db6 16 ♗b3 c6 17 d5 cxd5 18 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 19 exd5 ♗f5! 20 ♗xc4 ♗xb1 21 ♗g5 ♗f5 22 ♗xe7 ♗c8! 23 ♗f4 ♗e8 24 ♗xd6 ♖xe1+ 25 ♖xe1

♖a8 was clearly better for Black in T.Urlau-J.Mittermueller, correspondence 2005.

b2) 15 b5 ♖db6 16 ♗c2 ♗d7 17 ♖b4 c5 18 bxc6 ♗xc6 19 ♗d3 d5 20 ♗f4 ♖c8 was level in V.Salov-V.Tkachiev, Groningen 1997.

c) 10 ♗d3 is important.



After 10...b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 b4 ♖c4 13 d5 (13 ♖xb5? d5! won material in W.Aramil-D.Vigorito, Las Vegas 2006) Black should take some care:

c1) 13...♗f5 14 e4 ♗d7 15 a4 ♖g4 16 ♖xb5 ♖b6 17 a5 (or 17 ♖c3 ♖xa4 18 ♖xa4 ♗xa4, as in H.Ellers-C.Wilhelmi, German League 1999, and here Mikhalievski's 19 b5! ♗d7 20 ♗f1 gives White a clear advantage) 17...♖xd5 18 exd5 ♗xb5 19 ♗d1 c5 20 dxc6 ♗xc6 21 ♗g5 with a big plus in A.Kveinys-D.Navara, Ustron 2006.

c2) 13...♗d7 14 a4 ♖g4 15 ♖xb5 ♖ce5 16 ♗b3 ♗xb5 17 axb5 ♗d7 (17...♖xb5 18 ♖d4) 18 ♖d4?! (Mikhalievski indicates 18 ♗f1! and 18 h3 ♖xf3+ 19 exf3 looks good for White as well) 18...♖xf2! was a blow in

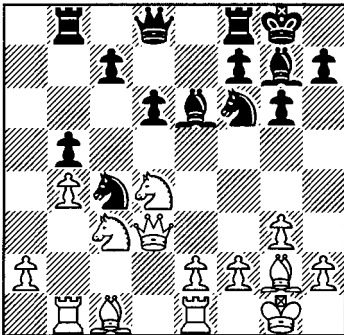
G.Vojinovic-D.Pikula, Belgrade 1999.

c3) 13...♟g4!? 14 ♞d4 ♟ge5 15 ♚d1 ♟d7 and now:

c31) 16 f4 c5! 17 bxc5 (not 17 dxc6?! ♟xc6 18 ♟xc6 ♟xc6 19 ♟xc6 ♚b6+) 17...dxc5 18 ♟dxb5 ♟g4 gives Black good play: for example, 19 e4 ♚a5 (19...♟d6!?) 20 e5 ♟xb5 21 ♟xb5 ♚xa2! 22 ♟c3 ♚f2+ 23 ♟h1 ♚d4! with the initiative.

c32) 16 e3 ♚e8?! 17 f4 ♟g4 18 ♚e2 with the idea of a4 put Black under pressure in A.Adly-N.Huschenbeth, Hamburg 2008. Instead 16...♚c8!? 17 f4 ♟g4 18 ♚e2 (or 18 h3 ♟h6!?) 18...♚a6 19 a4 ♚a7 would have given Black counterplay, such as with 20 ♟dxb5 ♟xb5 21 ♟xb5 ♚xa4 22 ♚xc4 ♚xb5.

c4) 13...e6 14 dxe6 ♟xe6 15 ♟d4 and now:



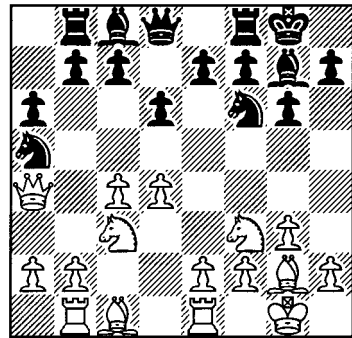
c41) 15...♟d7 16 a4 ♟e5 17 ♚c2 bxa4 18 b5! gave White an edge in A.Kupsys-V.Vaitonis, correspondence 2005.

c42) 15...♚e8!? 16 a4 ♟e5?! 17 ♚c2 bxa4 18 b5 gave White a similar advantage in J.Aho-G.Andersson, correspon-

dence 2007, but Black could have tried 16...bxa4 17 ♟xe6 (or 17 b5 ♟b6) 17...♚xe6 18 ♟xa4 ♟g4!?

c43) 15...♟e5 16 ♚d1 (a better try would be 16 ♚c2 ♟d7 17 a4) 16...♟d7 17 ♟g5?! h6 18 ♟xf6 ♚xf6 19 ♟d5 ♚d8 20 ♚c1 c6 21 ♟e3 d5 and Black was already much better in D.Harika-F.Nijboer, Wijk aan Zee 2009.

Returning to 10 ♚a4:



10...b6!?

This is more enterprising than 10...c5?! 11 dxc5 ♟d7 12 ♚c2 dxc5 13 ♟f4 ♚c8 14 ♟e5 with a big plus for White in A.Karpov-I.Smirin, Cap d'Agde (rapid) 1996.

11 c5

After 11 b3 c5 White's queen looks a bit funny, while 11 ♟d5 ♟xd5 12 cxd5 ♟d7 13 ♚c2 c5 would give Black good play. A speculative try is 11 e4!? ♟d7 (11...♟e6!?) 12 ♚d1 ♟xc4 13 b3 ♟a5 14 e5 ♟e8 15 ♟f4 and White had some compensation for the pawn in E.Janosi-G.Hervet, correspondence 2002.

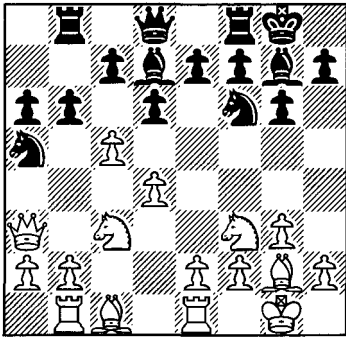
11...♟d7

With this move Black is ready to sac-

White sacrifices a pawn, but 11...♖e8!? is playable as well. After 12 ♖c2 (12 ♖xe8 ♜xe8 is even) 12...bxc5 (or 12...d5!?) 13 dxc5 ♖c6 14 ♔g5 ♔f5 15 e4 ♜xe4!? 16 ♜xe4 d5 17 ♜fd2 ♜b4 18 ♖d1 dxe4 19 ♔xe4 ♔xe4 20 ♜xe4 f5 21 ♜c3 e5 22 ♜d5 ♜xd5 23 ♖xd5+ ♖f7 24 ♖xf7+ ♜xf7 chances were pretty level in V.Filippov-A.Morozevich, Samara 1998.

12 ♖a3

White is worse after 12 ♖b4 ♜c6 13 ♖c4 b5 14 ♖b3 dxc5 15 dxc5 ♔e6, while 12 ♖c2 bxc5 13 dxc5 could be met with 13...d5 or 13...♜c6 with unclear play.



12...♜c4!

This is stronger than 12...♖c8.

13 ♖xa6

White grabs the pawn, as it is difficult for him to fight for the initiative after 13 ♖b3 b5 14 e4?! (better is 14 cxd6 cxd6 15 e4 to maintain equality according to Har Zvi) 14...dxc5! 15 dxc5 ♔g4 (Black intends ...♜d7 when White will be concerned with weaknesses on c5, e5 and f3) 16 ♖c2 ♜d7 17 b4 ♜de5 18 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 19 h3 (Har Zvi suggests 19 ♜e3 with the idea of h3, f4 and ♜d3,

but 19...c6 still looks very comfortable for Black) 19...♔f3! (Black must avoid 19...♜f3+? 20 ♔xf3 ♔xf3 21 ♜e3 and 19...♖d3 20 ♖xd3 ♜xd3 21 ♜e3 ♜xc1 22 ♜xc1 ♔xc3 23 ♜cxc3 ♔e6 24 ♜a3!? is annoying) and here:

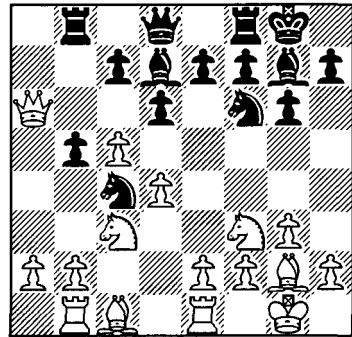
a) 20 ♔f4 ♖d3!? is at least equal for Black.

b) 20 ♜e3 ♔xg2 21 ♜xg2 c6 with a very comfortable position.

c) 20 ♔g5?! c6 21 ♔f1 ♔h5 22 ♔g2 ♔f3 23 ♔f1 ♔h5 24 ♔g2 h6 25 ♔f4 (after 25 ♔e3 ♜f3+ 26 ♔xf3 ♔xf3 White can no longer play ♜e3) 25...g5! 26 ♔xe5 ♔xe5 and Black's bishop-pair gave him some advantage in R.Har Zvi-I.Smirin, Israeli League 1998.

d) 20 ♔f1!? (with the idea of ♔f4xe5 and ♜e3 to trap the f3-bishop) 20...♔g4!? 21 ♔g2 ♔f3 repeats, but Black could also try 20...e6!? 21 ♔f4 ♜c6.

13...b5



White has snatched a pawn, but his queen is uncomfortable.

14 ♜h4

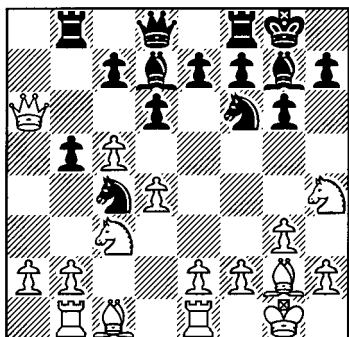
White unleashes the g2-bishop to help control some important queenside

squares. There are several alternatives, but Black has plenty of resources:

a) 14 cxd6 exd6 (or 14...cxd6 15 d2 d5!?) 16 b4 d6) 15 d2 dxd2 16 dxd2 and now both 16...b4 and 16...c6 leave Black with good compensation for the pawn.

b) 14 d2 g5 d5!? (with the idea of ...h6 and ...a8; instead 14...dxc5 15 dxc5 c6 16 dxc6 c7 17 dxd7 dxd7 18 d5 dxc5 allows White to play 19 c6!) 15 dxd5 dxd5 16 dxd5 d8 17 a7 dxd5 18 dxb8 f5 gives Black excellent play.

c) 14 d2 dxd2 15 dxd2 dxc5 16 a4 (after 16 dxc5 b4 with the idea of ...b5 Black is much better) 16...b4 17 d4 e4 18 dxe4 18 dxe4 dxd4 was fine for Black in A.Karpov-A.Shirov, Wijk aan Zee 1998. White has some compensation for the pawn, but no more than that.



14...dxc5!

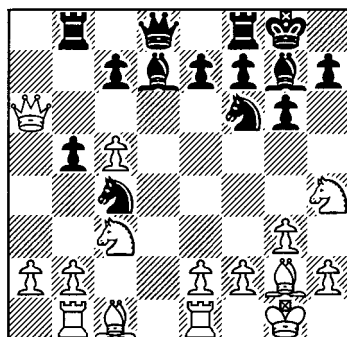
Other moves do not seem to work:

a) 14...d5 15 dxd5 dxd5 16 dxd5 dxd4 (16...d8 does not work after 17 a7 dxd5 18 dxb8 f5 19 dxf5 or 18...d7 19 e4 c6 20 d5) 17 d6 e8 18 d3 dxc5 19 dxc4 bxc4 20 dxc4 and

Black does not have enough.

b) 14...d8 15 c6 d6 (15...d8 also fails after 16 a7 d6 17 dxb5 dxb5 18 a4 or 16...d6 17 d5 d8 18 d7 d8 19 dxe6! dxb7 20 exf7+ dxf7 21 cxb7) 16 a7 dxc6 17 dxc6 dxc6 18 dxb5 and again Black's play falls short.

15 dxc5



15...c6!?

This works out well, but Black has a serious alternative in 15...b4! and then:

a) 16 dxc4 d6 17 d5 (no better are 17 a6 bxc3 or 17 f4 bxc3) 17...dxd5 gives Black good activity for the pawn.

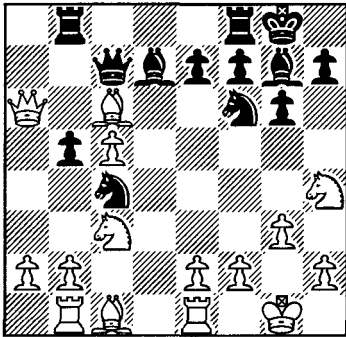
b) 16 d4 d5 17 a7 (or 17 dxf6+ exf6! 18 a7 c6 19 d4 d8 20 d7 g5) 17...d5 again with excellent play.

c) 16 a4! bxc3 17 dxc4 d4! 18 h3 (worse is 18 b4 dxa4! 19 dxc4 c2 20 d2 dxb2 21 dxb2 d2) 18...d6 19 d4 d6 20 c2 d5 21 bxc3 dxb1 22 dxb1 dxc3 23 d4 d2 24 f4 was drawn here in M.Vujanovic-K.Herzog, correspondence 2008. Black has good play for the pawn after 24...d3 25 f1 dxc1 26 dxc1 d4.

16 ♖xc6

After 16 ♖f4 e5 17 ♖g5 ♖a8 (not 17...♗c7 18 ♖ed1! with ideas like ♖xd7 and ♗xc6 or ♖xf6 and ♖d5) 18 ♗b7 ♖a5! (this is stronger than 18...♖b8 with a repetition) 19 ♗b6 ♗c8 (Black threatens ...♖c4 or ...♖a6) 20 ♖xf6 (no better is 20 ♖xb5 ♖c4 21 ♗c7 cxb5 22 ♗xc8 ♖axc8) 20...♖xf6 21 ♖e4 ♖d8 22 ♖d6 ♖xb6 23 ♖xc8 ♖xc5 24 b4 ♖xb4 25 ♖xb4 ♖axc8 Black has a clear extra pawn.

16...♗c7



17 ♖xd7

White begins to drift, but he must already be careful. For example:

a) 17 ♖d5 ♖xd5 18 ♖xd5 ♗xc5 19 ♖xc4 ♗xc4! (19...bxc4 is also good) 20 ♖f4 ♖a8 21 ♗b7 ♖c6! 22 ♗xe7 ♖fe8 23 b3 (23 ♗d6 ♖ad8 24 ♗a3 ♖xe2 would give Black a winning attack) 23...♖xe7 24 bxc4 bxc4 and Black was clearly better in A.Karpov-P.Della Morte, Buenos Aires (simul) 2005.

b) 17 ♖g2!? is probably White's best. After 17...♗xc5 18 ♖f4 ♖b6 19 ♗a7 b4 20 ♖e4 (not 20 ♖a4? ♖xa4 21 ♗xa4 g5)

20...♖xe4 21 ♖xe4 White is doing okay according to Stohl. Here Black could also try 17...♖g4!? with good play.

17...♖xd7 18 ♖xb5

Stohl also gives 18 ♖d5 ♗xc5 with the idea of 19 ♗c6 ♗a7!? 20 ♖xe7+ ♖h8 21 b3 ♖de5 22 ♗g2 ♗xe7 23 bxc4 bxc4 with compensation.

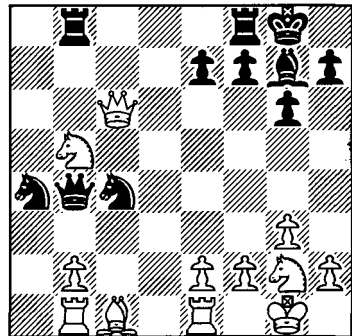
18...♗xc5 19 a4?!

It is not easy to play with the queen in such a precarious situation. Better was 19 ♖d1 ♖b6 20 ♗a7 (not 20 ♗a4 ♖xb5 21 ♖xd7 ♖b6) 20...♖b8! 21 ♖a3 (21 a4? ♖xb5) 21...♖c6 (21...♖xa3? 22 ♖e3 would turn the tables) 22 ♗a4 ♖xb2 23 ♖xb2 ♖xb2 24 ♖c2 ♖fb8 with a likely draw.

19...♗b4 20 ♖g2

Black also has the initiative after 20 ♖f4 ♖c5 21 ♗c6 ♖b6! 22 ♗f3 (or 22 ♗c7 ♖e6) 22...♖xb2.

20...♖c5 21 ♗c6 ♖xa4



22 ♖c7

The knight gets stuck here, but 22 ♖a7 ♖b7 23 b3 ♖a5! wins material after 24 ♗xa4 ♗xa4 25 bxa4 ♖xb1 or 24 ♗c2 ♖c3.

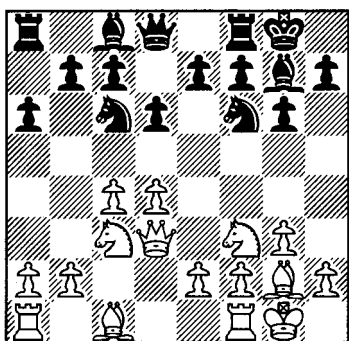
22...♖fc8 23 ♙f4

Or 23 ♖a1 ♗c5 24 ♙e3 ♗xe3 (White could save himself after 24...♗e6 25 ♖a4! ♗xb2 26 ♖xc4 ♖xc7 27 ♗e4) 25 ♗xe3 e6 and White has problems.

23...e5 24 ♙e3 ♖b7

Black won material in P.San Segundo Carrillo-A.Shirov, Benidorm (rapid) 2002.

E) 8 ♗d3



This move looks unusual, but it was recently advocated by Boris Avrukh in *Grandmaster Repertoire 2* and it has become quite popular. One of the main ideas is that with the c4-pawn protected, White threatens 9 d5 ♗a5? 10 b4 trapping the knight. Because this line is likely to continue developing quickly, we will examine several ideas for Black.

E1: 8...e5

E2: 8...♗d7

E3: 8...♙f5

E4: 8...♙d7

Most other moves can be quickly dismissed, but there is one very new

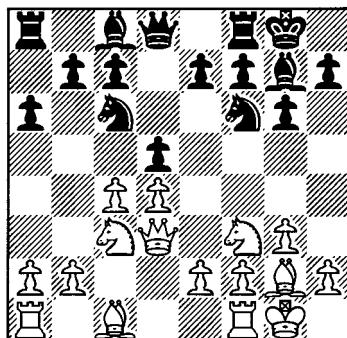
idea that is interesting:

a) 8...♖b8?! 9 d5 ♗a5? 10 b4 as mentioned before is just bad. Black cannot save himself with 10...♙f5 11 e4 ♗xe4 because 12 ♗xe4 ♙xa1 13 bxa5 leaves White with a winning position.

b) 8...♗b4 does not force White back to d1, because after 9 ♗d2 with the idea of b3 and ♙b2, White's queen is not badly placed at all.

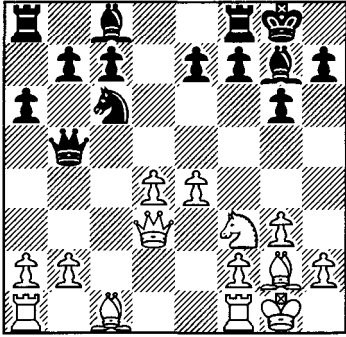
c) 8...♙g4 9 d5 ♙xf3 10 exf3! ♗e5 11 ♗e2 c5 12 f4 is good for White. Generally Black has a lot of trouble creating counterplay in this structure.

d) 8...d5! is a shocking idea.



Black spends a move on ...a6 and then offers to play a Grünfeld a tempo down! The justification for this is the odd placement of White's queen. After 9 cxd5 (White should avoid 9 ♗e5?! dxc4, while 9 e3 could be met with 9...dxc4 10 ♗xc4 ♙e6 or 9...♙f5 10 ♗e2 ♗b4!?) 9...♗xd5 10 ♗xd5 (instead 10 ♖d1 ♗xc3 11 bxc3 was better for White in D.Harika-K.Zuse, Gibraltar 2008, but 10...♙g4! is an improvement) 10...♗xd5 11 e4 (Black is better after both 11 ♗e5?

♗xe5 and 11 ♖f4 ♖f5 with ideas like ...♗xd4 or ...♗e4) 11...♗b5! it turns out that ...a6 was useful after all!



After 12 ♗xb5 (if 12 ♗c3 ♖g4 or 12 ♗e3 ♖g4 when Black has counterplay with ideas like ...♗fd8 and ...♗b6 pressuring the d4-pawn) 12...axb5 13 ♖e3 ♖g4 already Black is doing well. With 14 e5 (14 ♗fd1 could be met with 14...♗fd8 or even 14...♗a4!?) there are a couple of practical examples:

d1) 14...♗fd8 15 ♗fc1 ♖e6 16 ♗g5 ♖xa2 17 ♗e4 was T.Banusz-A.Korobov, Rijeka 2010. Here 17...♗d5 looks good.

d2) 14...♗b4 15 a3 ♗c2 16 ♗ac1 ♗xe3 17 fxe3 ♖xf3 (Black could play for more with 17...c6 18 ♗d2 ♖h6 planning ...f6) 18 ♖xf3 1/2-1/2 A.Baburin-M.Heidenfeld, Dun Laoghaire 2010.

E1) 8...e5

This is a classical response.

9 dxe5

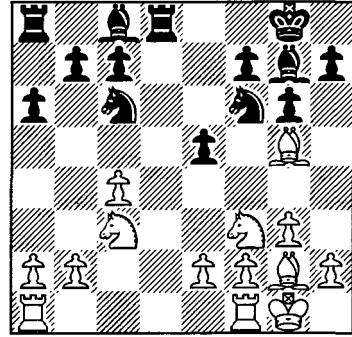
White's hopes for an advantage are based on the subtle weakening of the b6-square in the endgame. Instead 9 d5 ♗b4 10 ♗d1 a5! intending ...♗a6 is not

very dangerous for Black.

9...dxe5

Simplification with 9...♗xe5 does not help Black, as after 10 ♗xe5 dxe5 11 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 12 ♖g5 ♗e8 13 ♗d5 ♗xd5 14 cxd5 White has pressure down the c-file.

10 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 11 ♖g5



As in many exchange variations of the King's Indian, White's pin creates the threats of both ♗d5 and ♖xf6 followed by ♗d5.

11...♖e6

This is the main response, but the alternative 11...♗e8 is of similar value. White has:

a) 12 ♗d2 ♗d4 13 e3 (13 c5 ♗b8 14 ♗c4 ♖g4 is okay for Black according to Avrukh) 13...♗e6 14 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 15 b4 ♖g7 is fine for Black. The two bishops even give him good long-term chances. The first idea is to play ...f5 and ...e4.

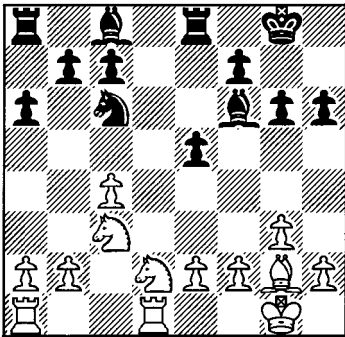
b) 12 ♗d5 ♗xd5 13 cxd5 and now:

b1) 13...♗d4 14 ♗xd4 exd4 15 ♗ac1 h6 (worse is 15...♖e5 16 ♗fd1 ♖g4 17 f3 ♖d7 18 f4 ♖d6 19 ♖f3 when the d4-pawn was weak in J.Chabanon-

O.Touzane, Montauban 2000) 16 ♖f4 ♜xe2 17 ♜xc7 g5 is unclear.

b2) 13...♗b4 14 e4 c6 (or 14...f5!?) 15 a3 (after 15 d6 White's d-pawn is more of a weakness than a strength following Bologan's 15...f6 16 ♖d2 ♗d3 17 ♖c3 ♗c5) 15...h6 16 axb4 (Black is fine after 16 ♖xh6 ♖xh6 17 axb4 cxd5 18 exd5 ♖g4 19 h3 ♖xf3 20 ♖xf3 e4 according to Bologan) 16...hxg5 17 ♗xg5 f6 18 ♗f3 cxd5 19 exd5 e4 20 ♗d2 f5 21 ♗c4 ♖d7 with compensation – Bologan.

c) 12 ♜fd1 is the main move. After 12...h6 13 ♖xf6 (13 ♖e3 e4 14 ♗d2 ♖f5 15 h3 g5! was pretty comfortable for Black in Bu Xiangzhi-Ding Liren, Xinghua 2011, and he even went on to win) 13...♖xf6 14 ♗d2 (14 ♗d5 ♖d8 15 ♗d2 f5 is fine for Black) Black has:



c1) 14...♖e6 15 ♗d5 ♖d8 16 ♗e4 ♖g7 17 ♗c5 ♖c8 18 ♗c3 (with the idea of ♖xc6) 18...♗a5 19 b4 ♗xc4 20 ♗xb7 gives White a clear advantage according to Avrukh.

c2) 14...♗d4 and then:

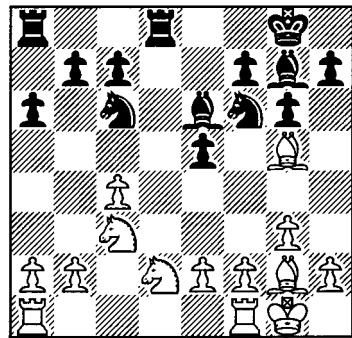
c21) 15 ♗de4 ♖d8 16 ♗c5 ♜b8 17 e3 ♗e6 18 ♗d7 ♖xd7 19 ♜xd7 ♗c5 20 ♜d2

a5 (or 20...e4 with the idea 21 b4 ♖f6 22 ♜c1 ♖xc3 23 ♜xc3 ♗a4 24 ♜c1 c5) 21 ♜d5 ♖e7 22 ♗e4 (22 ♜xe5 c6 traps the e5-rook and threatens ...♗d3 or ...f6) 22...♗xe4 23 ♖xe4 b6 24 ♖g2 with a draw in I.Zugic-V.Babula, Istanbul Olympiad 2000.

c22) 15 c5!?! is Avrukh's new idea. After 15...♜b8 (Black also has difficulties after 15...♖d8 16 ♗c4 ♖g7 17 ♜d2 or 15...♗e6 16 c6 b5 17 ♗d5 ♖d8 18 b4 with the idea of e3, ♗b3, a4 and ♖f1 – Avrukh) 16 ♗d5 ♖d8 17 e3 ♗e6 18 b4 gives White the easier game according to Avrukh. It is indeed difficult for Black to figure out what to do here.

c3) 14...♖g7 is Black's latest try. This was tested in a high-level correspondence game and Black held without too much trouble: 15 ♗de4 ♖e7 16 ♗d5 ♖d8 17 ♗c5 ♗d4 18 ♗c3 c6 19 e3 ♗e6 20 ♗5e4 ♖c7 21 ♜d2 f5 22 ♗d6 ♜d8 23 ♜ad1 ♖f6 24 b4 ♖e7 25 c5 a5 26 b5 ♗xc5 27 ♗xc8+ ♜axc8 with a draw in K.Reinhart-M.Leutwyler, correspondence 2009.

12 ♗d2



12...h6

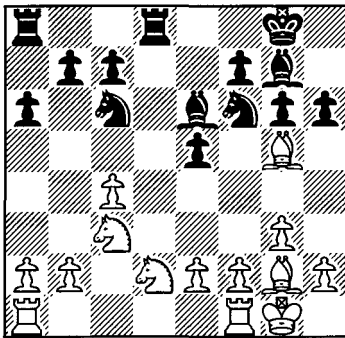
This is safer than 12...d4 13 ffd1 (Black has enough counterplay after 13 fxb7 f8b8 14 fxa6 fxb2) 13...c6 14 e3 d2c2 (not 14...d2f5 15 d2ce4) 15 f8ab1 and here:

a) 15...h6 16 fxf6 fxf6 17 a3 and the c2-knight is in trouble.

b) 15...g4 16 f3! is good for White.

c) 15...b4?! was L.Psakhis-V.Babula, Batumi 1999. Here Psakhis points out 16 a3 d3 17 d2e4 d2xe4 18 fxe4 f6 19 fxf6 fxf6 20 fxd3 when White has an extra pawn.

d) 15...d7 is well met by Avrukh's 16 d2b3! (stronger than 16 fxf6 fxf6 17 d2e4 fxd1+ 18 fxd1 fe7 19 f1f5 20 d2d6 b5 21 c5 d2b4 which was drawn here in M.Drasko-G.Szabo, Sozina 2004, although by now Black is already better) 16...fxc4 17 fxf6 fxd1+ 18 fxd1 fxf6 19 d2a5 fe6 20 d2xb7 f8b8 21 d2c5 fxb2 22 d2xe6 fxe6 23 fxc6 with a comfortable plus.



13 fxf6 fxf6

Black often plays 13...fxd2, but after

14 fxcg7 fxcg7 15 fxc6! (15 b3 d2a5!? is pointed out by Avrukh) 15...bxc6 16 b3 and here:

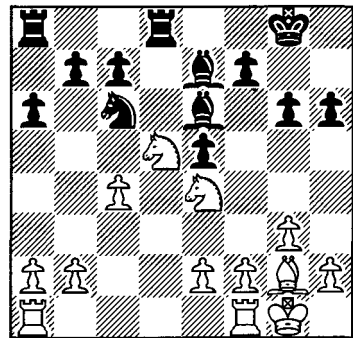
a) 16...a5 17 ffd1 fxd1+ (if 17...f2c2 18 fdc1 f2b2 19 f8ab1 f2d2 20 f1f1 and White will challenge the rook) 18 fxd1 a4 allows Black to eliminate his a-pawn, but not his problems. After 19 d2xa4 fxc4 20 f2d2 White had a clear advantage in I.Csom-Y.Zimmerman, Hungarian League 2001.

b) 16...f8ad8 17 ffd1 f8d4 18 fxd2 (or the immediate 18 f1f1) 18...f2xd2 and now rather than 19 f2c1 a5! 20 f1f1 a4 which allowed Black to equalize in D.Bocharov-O.Loskutov, Novosibirsk 2002, White should play Avrukh's suggestion 19 f1f1! when White will chase away the black rook and enjoy a sizeable advantage.

14 d2e4

Black has enough counterplay after 14 d2d5 fxd5 15 cxd5 d2b4!.

14...fe7 15 d2d5



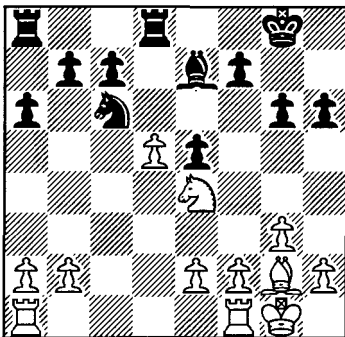
15...f2xd5

This forces the pace. Black has also tried some quieter methods:

a) 15...♖ab8 16 ♖ac1 f5 17 ♗xc7 ♕f7 18 ♗c3 ♕xc4 19 ♗d3d5 ♕xd5 20 ♕xd5+ ♖h8 21 ♕xc6 bxc6 22 b3 with a clear advantage – Avrukh.

b) 15...♖ac8 was the move I had in my old notebook. Black's defence is not so simple, however: 16 ♗xe7+ ♗xe7 17 ♗c5 (instead 17 b3 allows Black to equalize with 17...b6 18 ♖fd1 f5 19 ♗c3 ♖xd1+ 20 ♖xd1 ♖b8, as was shown in A.Kabatianski-E.Hoeksema, Dutch League 2010) 17...♕xc4 (17...b6 is not as bad as it looks, but after 18 ♗xe6 fxe6 19 ♕b7 ♖b8 20 ♕xa6 ♖a8 21 ♕b7 ♖a7 22 ♕f3 ♖d2 23 ♖fb1 ♖a4 24 c5! White is still for choice) 18 ♕xb7 ♖b8 and here instead of 19 ♕xa6 ♕xa6 20 ♗xa6 ♖xb2 with equality, White could try 19 b4!: for example, 19...c6 20 ♕xa6 (if 20 a3 ♖d5! with the idea of 21 ♕xa6 ♖xc5) 20...♕xa6 21 ♗xa6 ♖b6 22 ♗c5 ♖xb4 23 a4 ♖a8 24 ♖fb1 ♖xb1 25 ♖xb1 ♖a5 26 ♖c1 and White keeps a small advantage.

16 cxd5

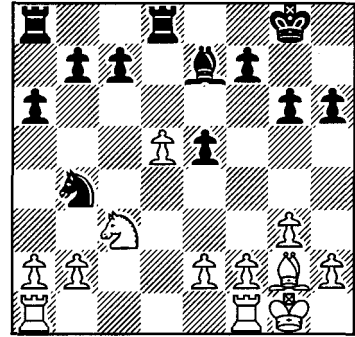


16...♗b4

Other moves are no better: 16...♗a7 17 ♖ac1 c6 18 ♗c3 keeps the initiative,

while 16...♗d4 17 e3 ♗b5 (if 17...♗f5 18 ♖ac1 ♖ac8 19 ♕h3! maintains a plus) 18 ♖fc1 (18 ♖ac1 ♖ac8 19 a4 was I.Som-M.Held, Zurich 1991, and now 19...♗d6 20 ♗c5 would be similar) 18...♖ac8 19 a4 ♗d6 20 ♗c5 gave White an edge in A.Guseinov-M.Zulfugarli, Baku 2000.

17 ♗c3



17...c6

It is best to eliminate the c7-pawn. Other moves do not come close to equalizing:

a) 17...♕d6 was K.Grycel-A.Mista, Wisla 2000. Here Avrukh gives 18 ♖fc1 a5 19 ♗b5 ♗a6 20 ♖c4 when White can build up on the queenside.

b) 17...f5 looks active, but it is really too adventurous after 18 a3 ♗c2 19 ♖ac1 ♗d4 20 e3 ♗b3 (after 20...♗b5 21 ♗xb5 axb5 22 ♖xc7 ♕d6 23 ♖xb7 White mopped up in S.Atalik-N.Djukic Cannes 2007) 21 d6! ♗xc1 (White wins the rook ending after 21...♖xd6 22 ♕d5+ ♖xd5 23 ♗xd5 ♗xc1 24 ♗xe7+ ♖f7 25 ♖xc1 ♖xe7 26 ♖xc7+) 22 dxe7 ♗e2+ 23 ♗xe2 ♖e8 24 ♕xb7 ♖ab8 25 ♕d5+ ♖g7 26 b3 ♖xe7 27 ♖c1 and the two minor pieces

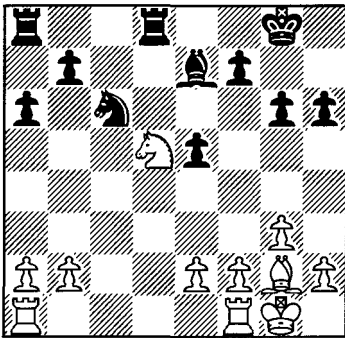
clearly outclassed the rook in C.Goldwaser-J.Blit, Buenos Aires 2004.

18 dxc6

After 18 ♖fd1 ♗xd5 19 ♗xd5 cxd5 20 ♗xd5 ♖ab8 21 ♖ac1 ♗d6 White's advantage is only optical.

18...♗xc6 19 ♗d5!

This is the key to White's play. The b6-square is weakened and this allows White to fight for an advantage. Instead 19 ♖fd1 ♖xd1+ 20 ♖xd1 ♗d8 is level, while 19 ♗xc6 bxc6 20 ♖fd1 f5 is also okay for Black, as his king can quickly enter the fray with ...♗f7-e6.



19...♗d6

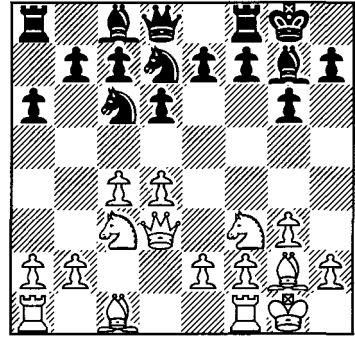
This looks like Black's best try. Instead 19...♗f8 20 ♗b6 ♖ab8 21 ♗xc6 bxc6 22 ♗c4 gave White a lasting advantage in Dautov-Milov, Essen 2000.

20 ♖ac1 ♗f8 21 ♗b6 ♖ad8!

Black fights for the d-file. This is much better than the complacent 21...♖e8?! 22 ♗xc6 bxc6 23 ♖fd1 ♖ed8 24 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 25 ♗f1 when White again had a lasting edge in Zhang Zhong-N.Ginting, Tarakan 2008. After 21...♖ad8! 22 ♗xc6 ♖xc6 (22...bxc6 is

also possible, but Black should aim to reduce the remaining material) 23 ♖xc6 bxc6 24 ♗c4 ♗g7 Black's king quickly enters the game and White's edge is minimal.

E2) 8...♗d7!?



This is a fighting response and was recently played by Avrukh himself when he found himself facing 8 ♗d3. Black is ready to play ...e5 without exchanging queens and he may also continue with the typical ...♖b8 now that d5 can be met by ...♗ce5.

9 ♗e3

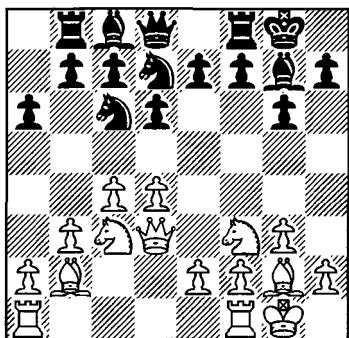
This flexible move is quite logical, considering Black can no longer play ...♗f6-g4. White develops a piece and may switch his queen back to d2 to prepare ♗e3-h6. Others:

a) 9 ♗g5 provoking ...h6 is not in White's interest, especially considering Black sometimes plays this move voluntarily (see note 'a' to Black's 9th move, below). After 9...h6 10 ♗e3 e5 11 ♗d2 (after 11 d5 ♗e7 White's queen and bishop are both misplaced and ...f5 is

coming) 11...exd4 12 ♖xd4 ♕ce5! 13 b3 (White begins to feel uncomfortable after 13 ♖xh6 ♖xc4 14 ♜f4 ♖e5) 13...♗g4 14 h3 ♖xe3 15 ♜xe3 ♜e8 16 ♜d2 ♖c5 with the bishop-pair Black has nothing to fear. Following 17 ♖h2 a5 18 ♜ab1 c6 19 e3 h5 20 a3 a4!? 21 b4 ♖b3 22 ♖xb3 axb3 23 ♜xb3? ♖e6 24 ♜e2? b5 White's position quickly fell apart in R.Swinkels-M.Turov, Haarlem 2010.

b) 9 e4 e5 10 ♖g5 (or 10 d5 ♖d4) 10...f6 11 ♖e3 exd4 12 ♖xd4 ♖de5 13 ♜e2 (Black had good counterplay after 13 ♖xc6 bxc6 14 ♜e2 ♖e6 15 b3 f5 16 ♜ac1 ♜d7 17 f3 ♜ae8 in G.Mateuta-P.Blehm, Yerevan 2000) 13...♖xd4 14 ♖xd4 ♖g4! 15 f3 ♖e6 16 b3 f5 gives Black sufficient play: 17 exf5 (17 ♜ad1 f4!?) 17...♖xf3+! 18 ♜xf3 ♖xd4+ 19 ♖h1 ♜xf5 20 ♜xb7 ♖xc3 21 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 22 ♖xa8 ♖xa1 23 ♜xa1 ♜f2 and Black's active rook gave him the advantage in E.Danielian-O.Loskutov, Alushta 2005.

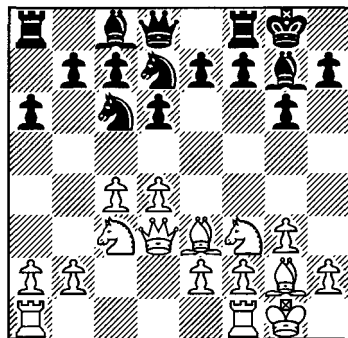
c) 9 b3 ♜b8 (also possible is 9...e5 10 dxe5 ♖dxe5) 10 ♖b2 and here:



c1) 10...e6!? is a typical, flexible move: 11 ♜ac1 b5 12 cxb5 axb5 13 e3

♖b7 with interesting play in K.Grycel-P.Blehm, Polish League 2000. If 14 ♜xb5 (or 14 ♖xb5 ♖b4 15 ♜d2 ♖xa2), then 14...♖xd4!

c2) 10...b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 d5 (this looks a little premature; instead 12 ♜ac1 ♖b4 13 ♜d2 c5 was unclear in M.Grabarczyk-M.Szelag, Ustron 2007) 12...♖c5 (12...♖ce5 was possible as well, but Avrukh prefers to keep pieces on against his lower-rated opponent) 13 ♜d2 b4 14 ♖d1 ♖a5 15 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 16 ♖d4 (this is natural, but White's knight need not hurry to d4 and 16 ♖e3 e6 17 dxe6 fxe6 18 ♜ac1 looks like a better try) 16...e6 17 dxe6 fxe6! 18 ♖e3 was M.Gupta-B.Avrukh, Plovdiv 2010. Here 18...e5!? looks worth a try: for example, 19 ♖dc2 ♖axb3 20 axb3 ♖xb3 21 ♜d3 ♖xa1 22 ♖xa1 (or 22 ♜xa1 b3) 22...♖e6 with good play.



9...♜b8!?

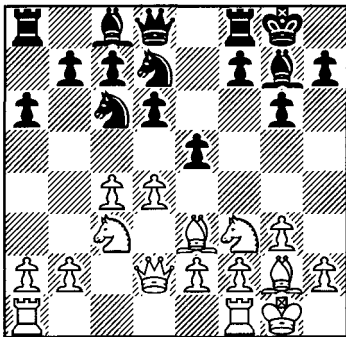
This is thematic and flexible, but Black has tried other things as well:

a) 9...h6 is Bologan's favourite line, but I do not like it after 10 ♜d2 ♖h7 11 d5 and here:

a1) 11...♖ce5 12 ♖xe5 (also good is 12 b3 ♖xf3+ 13 exf3!) 12...♖xe5 13 b3 c5 14 dxc6 ♖xc6 was Bu Xiangzhi-V.Bologan, Wijk aan Zee 2007. Here Bu's suggestion 15 ♔d5!? ♕xa1 16 ♖xa1 with excellent compensation looks very dangerous.

a2) 11...♖a5 12 b3 c5 13 dxc6 bxc6 (13...♖xc6 is possible too, but Black's position is passive) and now instead of 14 ♖ac1 ♖b8 15 ♖a7 ♖b7 16 ♖d4 c5 17 ♖xg7 ♖xg7, as in E.Alekseev-V.Bologan, Poikovsky 2007, when the rook does nothing on c1, Avrukh suggests 14 ♖ad1 ♖b8 15 ♖a7 ♖b7 16 ♖d4 c5 17 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 18 ♖h4! ♖b8 19 f4 with attacking chances.

b) 9...e5 is consistent, leading after 10 ♖d2 to:



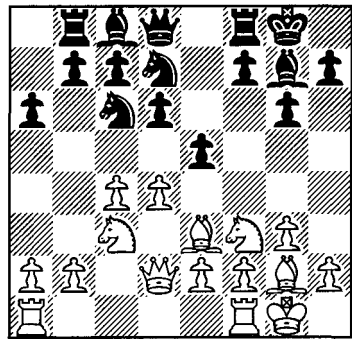
b1) 10...♖f6 can at the very least be met by 11 dxe5 dxe5 12 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 13 ♖g5 transposing to Line E1 with a couple of extra moves for each side.

b2) 10...exd4 11 ♖xd4 is a little better for White. Black should probably simplify with 11...♖xd4 12 ♖xd4 ♖e5 13 b3 ♖e8, although White's position is still

the more comfortable.

b3) 10...♖b6 11 b3 ♖g4 12 dxe5 dxe5 13 ♖ad1 ♖c8 was A.David-I.Smirin, Istanbul 2003. Here Avrukh's 14 ♖g5! is very strong. He gives 14...♖d8 15 ♖c1 ♖d4 16 c5! ♖d7 17 ♖xd4 exd4 18 ♖d5 ♖e8 19 ♖f4 with a clear advantage.

b4) 10...♖b8!? is quite playable and could also come about via 9...♖b8 10 ♖d2 e5.

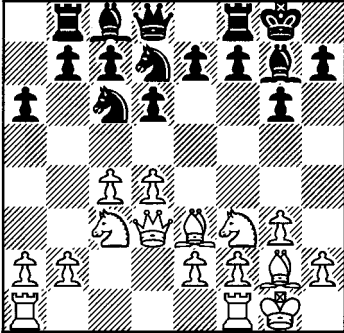


White has:

b41) 11 dxe5 dxe5 12 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 13 b3 ♖g4 14 ♖a7 (if 14 ♖f4 h6! with the idea of 15 h3 g5!) 14...♖a8 15 ♖d4 ♖h6! 16 f4 was drawn here in M.Grabarczyk-T.Markowski, Warsaw 2001. Avrukh gives the further 16...c5 17 ♖f2 ♖xf2 18 ♖xf2 ♖g7 with dark-square counterplay.

b42) 11 ♖ac1 f5!? (instead 11...exd4 12 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 13 ♖xd4 ♖e5 14 b3 ♖e6 15 ♖fd1 gave White a typical edge in R.Zhumabaev-Y.Zimmerman, Zvenigorod 2008) 12 ♖g5 (or 12 d5 ♖e7 13 ♖g5 ♖f6) 12...♖f6 13 dxe5 dxe5 14 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 15 ♖d5 ♖f7 16 ♖fd1 (after 16 ♖xc7 h6! Black seizes the initiative

with 17 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 18 ♜d5 e4 or 17 ♙e3 e4 18 ♜d2 ♜g4) 16...e4 17 ♜e1 ♙e6 18 b3 was V.Mikhalevski-T.Abrahamyan, Wheeling 2010. Here 18... ♙xd5 !? 19 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 20 cxd5 ♜e7 21 ♞xc7 ♙e5 22 ♞c5 b6 23 ♞c2 ♞xd5 would have given Black an excellent position.



10 ♞a1

White's most frequent choice, but perhaps not the best. Others:

a) 10 a3 looks like a waste of time: 10...e5 11 d5 (after this Black's pawns are ready to roll, but 11 ♞d2 would be well met by 11... exd4 12 ♜xd4 ♜a5 ! when White's a3 has left him with queenside weaknesses) 11... ♜e7 12 b4 f5 13 ♜g5 e4 14 ♞c2 ♜e5 15 ♙a7 ♞a8 16 ♙d4 h6 17 ♜e6 ♙xe6 18 dxe6 ♜7c6 and Black was taking over in A.Baburin-L.McShane, British League 1998.

b) 10 ♞d2 is Avrukh's recommendation: 10... ♞e8 (White's idea is 10...b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♙h6 when Black's position lacks dynamism) 11 d5 ♜ce5 12 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 13 b3 b5 (Black could try 13...c5 14 dxc6 bxc6 ! when 15 f4 ♜g4 16 ♙xc6 ? fails to 17... ♜xe3 17 ♞xe3 ♙xc3 , but

White may keep an edge with 15 ♙a7 ♞b7 16 ♙d4) 14 cxb5 axb5 15 ♙a7 ♞b7 16 ♙d4 b4 17 ♜d1 is a line given by Avrukh, who claims an edge here. This still looks pretty unclear, but Black can also play 10...e5!? which transposes to variation 'b4' above.

10...b5

Instead 10...e5 11 ♞d2 would transpose back to note 'b42' to Black's 9th, while 10...e6!? has also been tried.

11 ♜d2

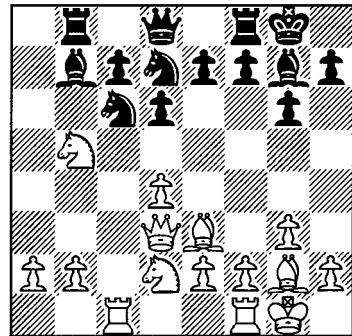
Or 11 cxb5 axb5 and then:

a) 12 ♜xb5 ♜b4 13 ♞c4 ♜xa2 is a typical reaction. If 14 ♞a1 then 14... ♙a6 !

b) 12 ♜g5 ♙b7 13 ♜xb5 ♜b4 14 ♞c4 ♙xg2 15 ♙xg2 c6! gives Black counter-play. Then 16 ♜c3 ? d5 17 ♞b3 ♜d3 wins the exchange.

c) 12 ♜d5 ♙b7 13 ♙g5 h6 14 ♞xc6 hxg5 15 ♜b4 e5 (maybe even better is 15...g4 16 ♜d2 e5) 16 dxe5 was H.Liebert-B.Perenyi, Decin 1978, where 16... ♙xe5 ! would have given Black good play.

11...♙b7! 12 cxb5 axb5 13 ♜xb5



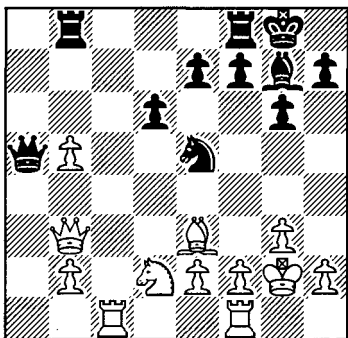
13...♗ce5!

This is even better than 13...♗b4 14 ♗c4 ♕xg2 15 ♖xg2 c6 with unclear play.

14 dxe5 ♗xe5 15 ♗b3

Instead 15 ♗c2 ♕xg2 16 ♖xg2 ♖xb5 is fine for Black and 17 ♗xc7? ♗a8+ with the idea of ...♖xb2 would give him a strong initiative.

15...♕xg2 16 ♖xg2 c6 17 a4 cxb5 18 axb5 ♗a5



With accurate play Black is able to eliminate White's extra pawn.

19 b6 ♗g4 20 ♗c4 ♗a8+ 21 ♖g1

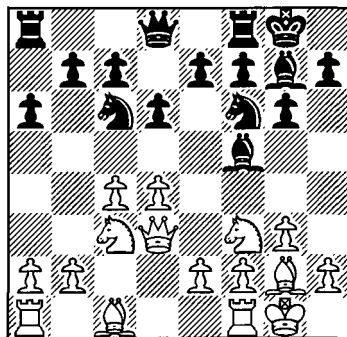
21 f3 d5 is similar.

21...d5 22 ♗d2 ♗xe3 23 ♗xe3

A draw was agreed here in A.Kharitonov-F.Amonatov, Moscow 2006. Black could play 23...e6!? (also sufficient is 23...♗b7 24 ♖c7 ♗xb6 25 ♗xb6 ♖xb6 26 ♖xe7 ♖xb2 with the ideas of ...♖a8 and ...♕f6) 24 ♗b3 d4! (not 24...♗b7 25 ♗c5 ♗xb6 26 ♗d7) 25 ♗xd4 ♗a6 when he will win both of White's b-pawns.

E3) 8...♕f5

With this move Black heads for familiar positions from Line C. Black will be down a tempo, however, so the question is whether White can make use of this or not.



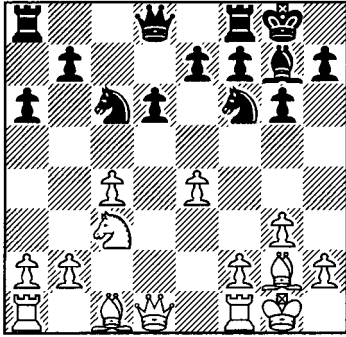
9 e4 ♕g4

So White has the move ♗d1-d3 for free. This may not seem like much, but there are positions where White is happy to have this move in and at the very least White is not in a pin.

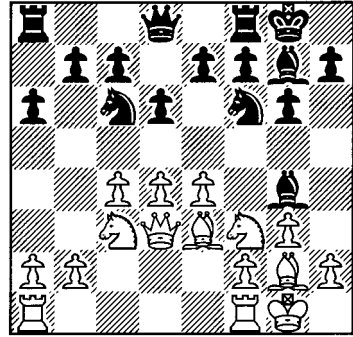
10 ♕e3

Instead 10 h3 ♕xf3 11 ♕xf3 e5 12 d5 ♗d4 13 ♕g2 ♗d7 14 ♕e3 c5 15 dxc6 bxc6 16 ♗a4 (perhaps 16 b4) 16...♖b8 17 b3 ♗c5! (the central grip means more than potential pawn weaknesses) 18 ♗xc5 dxc5 19 ♖fd1 a5 saw Black take over the initiative in P.Nielsen-P.Svidler, Copenhagen (rapid) 2010. An important alternative, however, is 10 d5. After 10...♕xf3 11 ♗xf3 ♗d4 12 ♗d1 (similar is 12 ♗d3 ♗d7 13 ♕e3 c5 14 dxc6 ♗xc6, but White's queen would be more vulnerable) 12...c5 (12...♗d7 13 ♕e3 c5 14 dxc6 ♗xc6 is variation 'b', below) 13 dxc6 ♗xc6 a Maroczy structure has

arisen where Black has exchanged off his light-squared bishop for a knight.



15...Bc8) 16 a3 Bfc8 17 f4 Wd8 18 b4 gave White a clear advantage in A.Goldin-G.Guseinov, Calvia Olympiad 2004.



We will see similar structures in certain lines of the Four Pawns Attack and Averbakh Variation. In general, Black can be happy with this type of position, as he has enough room for his pieces and can hope to dominate the dark squares. Therefore it is not surprising that Avrukh considers this type of position to be fully playable for Black (he recommends the main move 10 e3). This may well be true, but equalizing is not so simple, as it is not easy for Black to create counterplay in this position:

10...d7

This is the typical response, but Black should look at the alternatives:

a) 14 e2 d7 15 Bc1 d5 16 b3 b5!? 17 cxb5 axb5 18 e3 b4!? (worse is 18...b4?! 19 a4) 19 a4 bxa4 20 dxa4 Bb8 (Black wants to cover the b6-square, but 20...d3 21 Bc4 Bb8 looks like an improvement) 21 We2 Wa5 22 f4 d3 23 Bcd1 was rather uncomfortable for Black in A.Wojtkiewicz-M.Perelshteyn, Katowice 1992.

a) 10...xf3 11 xf3 d7 12 g4!? (not 12 e2 d5!, but 12 g2 e5 13 d5 d4 14 e2!? c5 15 Wd2 would compel Black to exchange off his d4-knight, leaving White with a slight advantage) 12...e5 13 xd7 Wxd7 14 d5 d4 15 xd4 exd4 16 e2 c5 17 dxc6 bxc6 18 dxd4 Bb8 19 db3 exb2 20 Bb1 a3 (20...g7 21 d5) 21 c5 Bb5 22 Bbd1 B8 23 Wf3 Wc7 24 d4 a5 25 e5 dxe5 26 db3 Bxd1 27 Bxd1 Bb5 28 Wf6 Bb8 29 B6 Bc8 30 h4 and White maintained the initiative in E.Iturrizaga-N.Mamedov, Moscow 2011.

b) 14 e3 is less common but may well be better: 14...d7 15 Bc1 Wa5 (Black should consider 15...Bb8 or

b) 10...e8!? is trickier: 11 h3 xf3 12 xf3 e5 13 d5 d4 14 g2 c5 (after 14...d7 15 e2 d5 16 Wd2 a5 17 dxd4 exd4 18 xd4 dx4 would lead to nothing for White, but 17 fe1!? would again force Black to exchange off his

strong knight) 15 dxc6 bxc6 with a typical position similar to those in Line C.

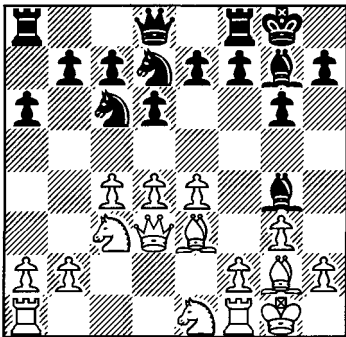
11 ♖e1

Avrukh's move gives White a simple advantage. Others give Black an easier time:

a) 11 ♖d2 leaves White a bit uncoordinated and after 11...e5 12 d5 ♖d4 13 f3 ♖c5 14 ♖b1 ♗d7 15 b4 ♖a4 Black has good play.

b) 11 ♖h4 is a bit extravagant: 11...e5 12 d5 ♖d4 13 f3 ♖c5 (13...♗h5!?) 14 ♖d1 ♗c8 15 f4 (after 15 b4 ♖d7 Black's strong d4-knight ensures him of counterplay) 15...a5! with unclear play.

c) 11 h3 ♗xf3 12 ♗xf3 e5 13 d5 ♖d4 14 ♗g2 c5 15 dxc6 bxc6 16 b4 gives us a typical position where White's extra move ♖d3 is useful, but not overwhelming. Here rather than 16...c5 17 a3 a5?! 18 b5 with an advantage for White in Ki.Georgiev-D.Popovic, Zlatibor 2006, Black could consider 16...♖e7, 16...♖c8 or 16...♗e8!?



11...e5

Instead 11...♖b4 does not seem to work: 12 ♖d2 c5 13 d5 (more critical

than 13 h3 cxd4 14 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 15 ♖xd4 ♖c6 16 ♖e3 ♗e6) 13...♖e5 14 b3 ♖a5 15 h3 ♗d7 16 f4 ♖ed3 17 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 18 e5!. A recent try, however, was 11...f5! and after 12 h3 (12 ♖c2! is also possible) 12...fxe4 13 ♖xe4 ♗f5 14 g4 ♗xe4 15 ♖xe4 e5 Black had given up his light-squared bishop in M.Maslik-Y.Vovk, Slovenian League 2011, but he was well developed, while White's king-side was slightly weakened and the e1-knight was not so easy to get into play. White may manage to prove some advantage here, but matters are not so clear and Black even went on to win.

12 d5 ♖d4 13 f3 ♖c5 14 ♖d1 ♗c8 15 ♖c2

Better than 15 b4 ♖d7 16 ♖b1 (Avrukh also mentions 16 ♖c2 a5! 17 a3 axb4 18 axb4 ♖xa1 19 ♖xa1 ♖b6 20 ♖d3 f5 with counterplay) 16...a5 17 a3 axb4 18 axb4 which was drawn here in A.Stefanova-E.Paehtz, Heraklion 2007. In fact Black can already seize the initiative with 18...♖b6! as pointed out by Avrukh.

15...♖xc2 16 ♖xc2 a5 17 a3 ♖a6

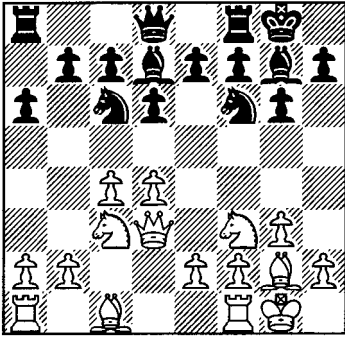
17...f5 18 b4 ♖a6 19 ♖ab1 is the same.

18 ♖ab1 b6 19 b4

This was J.Gonzalez Garcia-L.Martinez Duany, Sant Marti 2010. White's game is very pleasant and easy to play.

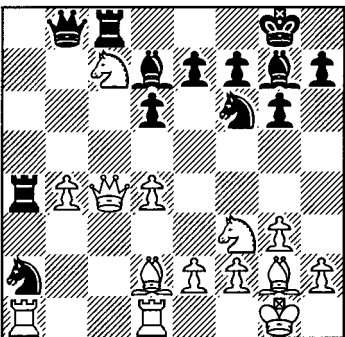
E4) 8...♗d7!?

This is a good fighting move. Black is not afraid of White's coming advance and develops a piece, rather than forcing things.



9 d5

This is White's main idea. Instead 9 e4!? could be met by 9...♖b8 or 9...b5!? (or even 9...♗g4, which would just transpose back to Line E3), while 9 ♔d1 can be met by 9...b5!. It looks like this move should not be possible, but the tactics work out for Black: 10 cxb5 axb5 11 ♖xb5 ♖b4 12 ♗c4 ♖xa2! (this is the point of Black's play; the knight looks a bit precarious, but it turns out that White cannot trap it) 13 ♗d2 ♗b8! 14 ♖xc7 (instead 14 ♖a3 ♗e6! 15 ♗b5 ♗b3! 16 ♔db1 ♗xb5 17 ♖xb5 c6 18 ♖c3 ♔fb8 leaves Black with the initiative) 14...♔a4 15 b4 ♔c8.



Now:

a) 16 ♔xa2?! ♔xc7 17 ♗b3 ♔ca7 and Black had the initiative in M.Turov-R.Van Kampen, Haarlem 2010. It turns out that all of White's pieces on the light squares are vulnerable to Black's bishop.

b) 16 ♖g5 keeps control of the e6-square and after 16...e6 17 ♔xa2 ♔xc7 18 ♗b3 ♗a7 (if instead 18...♔ca7 19 ♔da1 and White keeps the extra pawn) 19 b5!? (or 19 ♔da1 ♗xd4 20 ♔xa4 ♗xa4 21 ♔xa4 ♗xd2) 19...♔xa2 20 b6 ♗b8 21 ♗xa2 ♗xb6 22 e3 the position is fairly level.

9...♖b4 10 ♗d1

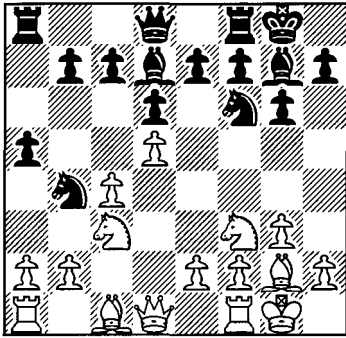
The white queen heads home. Other moves do not look any better:

a) 10 ♗b1 a5 11 e4 (after 11 a3 ♖a6 12 b4 ♗f5 13 ♗b3 axb4 14 axb4 ♖c5! 15 ♔xa8 ♖xb3 16 ♔xd8 ♔xd8 Black had the initiative in the endgame in A.Groenn-V.Milov, Oslo 2002) 11...c6 12 ♗e3 cxd5 13 cxd5 ♔c8 14 ♔c1?! ♖g4 15 ♗d2 ♗b6 16 ♗e1 f5 and Black had seized the initiative in D.Rombaldoni-M.Makropoulou, Rijeka 2009.

b) 10 ♗d2 a5 11 ♖d4 ♖g4 (also possible is 11...♗c8: for example, 12 ♔e1 ♗h3 13 ♗h1 ♖g4 14 ♖f3 h6!? with unclear play in D.Bocharov-E.Inarkiev, Istanbul 2003) 12 ♔b1 c5!? 13 dxc6 ♖xc6 14 ♖xc6 bxc6 15 b3 ♗f5 16 e4 ♗e6 17 ♗b2 ♔b8 18 ♖e2 ♗xb2 19 ♔xb2 ♗b6 with counterplay in V.Borovikov-R.Ponomariov, Kramatorsk 2001.

10...a5

Black has to create an escape square for his knight.



11 e4

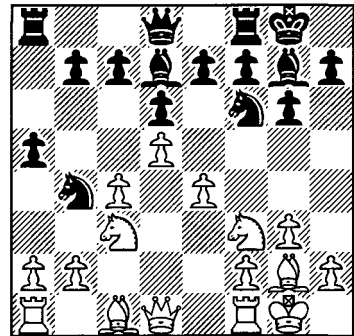
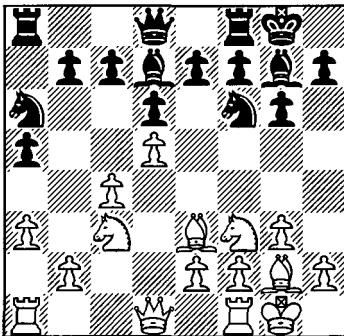
Instead 11 ♖e3 e5 12 dxe6 ♗xe6 13 a3 ♘c6 is fine for Black. After 14 c5 d5 15 ♘d4 ♘xd4 16 ♗xd4 c6 a draw was agreed in J.Votava-A.Khalifman, Fuegen 2006.

Avrukh suggests the immediate 11 a3 to prevent Black's knight from returning to c6. After 11...♗a6 12 ♗e3 (after 12 e4 ♘c5 Black has ideas like ...a4, ...e5 or even ...♗g4-e5) Black has:

17...♗h6?! 18 ♘d2 ♗g4 19 h3 ♘e5 20 f4 ♘d3, as in B.Avrukh-I.Bitansky, Israeli League 2009, Avrukh suggests 21 f5! ♖d7 22 ♘d5 with good attacking chances.

c) 12...c6 13 ♗d4 e5!? (instead Avrukh gives 13...c5?! 14 ♗e3 ♘c7 15 a4 e5 16 dxe6 ♗xe6 17 ♗f4 ♘fe8 18 ♖b3 as much better for White and 13...cxd5 14 ♘xd5! ♘xd5 15 cxd5 when White keeps a small edge) 14 dxe6 ♗xe6 15 ♘d2 ♖e8 looks okay for Black.

d) 12...♘c5!? is an active try. If 13 ♗xc5 (not 13 ♘d4?! ♗g4!) 13...dxc5 14 e4 (14 h3 ♘e8 15 e4 ♘d6 with the idea of ...e5 would compel White to play 16 e5!? ♘xc4 17 ♖e2 ♘b6 with unclear play) 14...♗g4 15 ♖e2 ♘e5 16 ♘d2 c6 17 h3 (if 17 f4 ♗g4 with the idea 18 ♖e3? ♘xc4) 17...cxd5 18 cxd5 ♖b6 with complex play.



11...e5

Bologan has favoured 11...♗g4!? when Black will exchange bishop for knight to create an imbalance. White has:

a) 12...e5 13 dxe6 ♗xe6 14 ♘d4! looks better for White.

b) 12...♖c8 13 ♗d4 ♗h3 14 e4 ♗xg2 15 ♘xg2 e5 16 dxe6 ♖xe6 17 ♖c1 also looks more comfortable for White. After

a) 12 h3 ♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 ♘d7 14 h4

♠c5 15 ♗e3 was M.Hoffmann-M.Van Delft, Bremen 2010. Here 15...♗bd3!? 16 ♗d2 e6 would give Black counterplay.

b) 12 ♗e3 ♗d7 13 ♗d2 ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 c6 15 ♗e2 (or 15 ♗ab1 ♗a6 16 b3 ♗ac5 17 ♗g2 ♗b6!?, T.Banusz-V.Bologan, Rijeka 2010) 15...♗a6 16 ♗ab1 ♗ac5 17 ♗d4 ♗xd4 18 ♗xd4 ♗b6 19 ♗fd1 e5!? (19...♗a6 is also possible) 20 ♗e3! (if 20 dxe6 fxe6 21 ♗xd6?! ♗xf2!) 20...♗f6 21 dxc6 ♗xc6 22 f3 ♗e6 23 ♗b5 ♗fd8 24 ♗d2 ♗d7 25 ♗bd1 ♗ad8 26 ♗f1 and White kept an edge in P.Tregubov-V.Bologan, Sochi 2006.

12 ♗e1

This move is White's universal choice. He can also change the pawn structure with 12 dxe6 ♗xe6, but now the black knight can return to c6: for example, 13 ♗e2 (13 b3?! ♗xe4 14 ♗xe4 ♗xa1 15 ♗g5 f6 does not work and 13 a3 could be met by 13...♗c6 or even with 13...♗xc4!? 14 axb4 ♗xf1 15 ♗xf1 axb4 16 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 17 ♗d5 ♗xd5 18 exd5 ♗a2) 13...♗c6 with an equal game.

12...b6

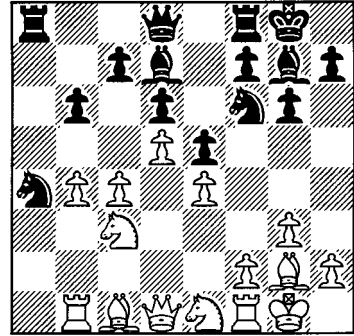
This is more solid than 12...c6 13 dxc6 ♗xc6 and then:

a) 14 ♗c2 ♗xc2 15 ♗xc2 ♗d7 16 ♗e3 f5 (16...♗c5 17 ♗xc5 dxc5 18 ♗ad1 would give White an easy edge) was A.Belezky-V.Milov, Benasque 2002. Here Milov gives 17 exf5 gxf5 18 ♗d5 f4 19 gxf4 ♗h4 as unclear, but 20 f5!? looks good for White.

b) 14 ♗e3 b6 15 ♗d3 ♗a6 16 ♗e2 ♗b8 17 ♗fd1 ♗b7 18 f3 gave White a pleasant advantage in R.Dautov-

A.Shirov, German League 2003.

13 ♗b1 ♗a6 14 a3 ♗c5 15 b4 axb4 16 axb4 ♗a4



17 ♗xa4

Instead 17 ♗b5? fails to 17...♗xb5 18 cxb5 ♗c3, while Milov gave 17 ♗e2 with an edge for White, but Black has excellent play after 17...b5!.

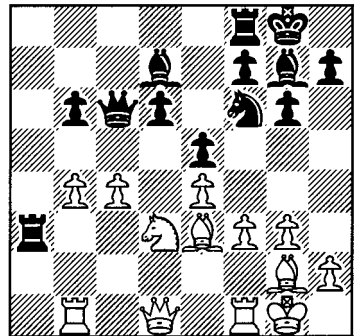
17...♗xa4 18 ♗d3 ♗a8

Black could also consider 18...♗e7 with the idea of ...♗fa8.

19 f3 c6!? 20 dxc6

After 20 ♗e3 cxd5 21 cxd5 (21 exd5 b5! undermines d5) 21...♗a6! Black has good play on the f1-a6 diagonal.

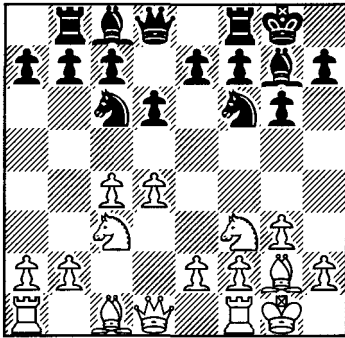
20...♗xc6 21 ♗e3 ♗a3



Black had good counterplay in V.Bukal-A.Fedorov, Sibenik 2005.

A Small Addendum

We have completed our coverage of the Fianchetto Variation and now I would like to mention an interesting move order that Black can employ. After **1 d4** ♟f6 **2 c4 g6 3** ♞f3 ♙g7 **4 g3 0-0 5** ♙g2 **d6 6 0-0** ♞c6 **7** ♞c3 instead of the usual 7...a6, Black can play **7...♞b8!?**



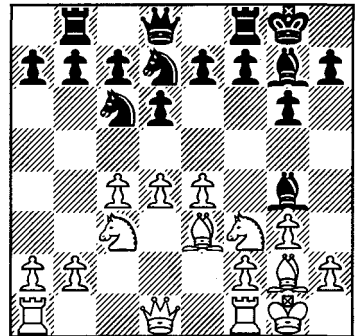
In most cases, this move will simply transpose to the main lines if Black plays 8...a6 on the next move: for example, after 8 b3 there is not really anything better than 8...a6 when Black has merely reversed the order of his seventh and eighth moves. However, we have seen that there are some variations where Black does not automatically play 8...♞b8 (after having played 7...a6), so it is in these lines that there are some little differences that should be considered when employing 7...♞b8 instead:

a) 8 d5 ♞a5 9 ♞d2 (instead 9 ♞d3 c5 10 e4 a6 and 9 b3 a6 lead respectively to variations 'a' and 'b2' considered in the

notes to White's 9th move at the start of Chapter 1) 9...c5 and now after either 10 ♞c2 or 10 ♞b1, the normal continuation 10...a6 would lead to the main lines, but Black could also consider 10...e6! with independent play.

b) After 8 h3 Black should play 8...a6 leading to the lines covered in Chapter 2 and the first part of Chapter 3. Note that Black no longer has the possibility of playing 7...a6 8 h3 ♙d7 from Chapter 3. In particular, in Line B2 of Chapter 2 it is important to have ...a6 in because Black has to play a quick ...b5.

c) 8 e4 is a line where ...♞b8 is likely to be more useful than ...a6 because there are several positions where the b-file is opened: for example, 8...♙g4 9 ♙e3 (a similar idea is seen after 9 h3 ♙xf3 10 ♙xf3 e5 11 d5 ♞d4 12 ♙g2 c5) 9...♞d7.



Now after 10 ♞d2 e5 11 d5 ♙xf3 12 ♙xf3 ♞d4 13 ♙g2 c5 14 dxc6 bxc6 we can see the usefulness of 7...♞b8. Instead White could play 10 ♞e2 ♞a5 11 ♞c1 c5 12 b3 ♞c6 13 d5. Now 13...♞b4 14 a3 ♞d3 still works tactically, but I

suspect Black would rather have played ...a6 instead of ...b8 in this position.

d) 8 ♖d3 is in many ways directed against 7...a6 and in fact Avrukh recommends a different line altogether against 7...b8 (Line D of this chapter). Here the classical response 8...e5 is quite a good reply (the alternatives 8...d7, 8...d7 and 8...f5 should be playable as well), because after 9 dxe5 (instead 9 d5 ♘b4 10 ♖d1 a5 is okay for Black) 9...dxe5 10 ♖xd8 ♗xd8 there are several positions,

including the main line of Line E, where the weakened b6-square (from 7...a6) brings Black a little trouble. Black's rook also tends to be a little safer on b8 than a8 in several positions. If we compare the position here after 11 ♕g5 ♕e6 12 ♞d2 h6 13 ♕xf6 ♕xf6, Black should have no trouble holding the balance.

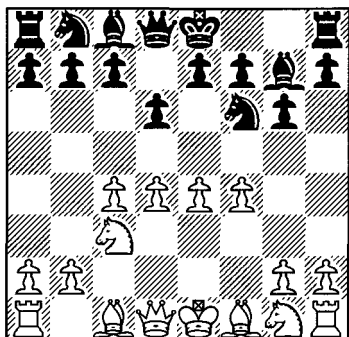
Overall, 7...b8 is a little unusual, but could provide an interesting surprise weapon for a player familiar with the subtle differences involved.

Chapter 6

Four Pawns Attack, Main Line

6...c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♖e2 exd5 9 cxd5

1 d4 ♠f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♙g7 4 e4 d6 5 f4



The Four Pawns Attack is not nearly as popular as the Classical, Sämisch or Fianchetto Variations, but has always held a certain appeal to aggressive players. White seizes as much space as possible and hopes to roll Black off the board with his pawns. White is spending yet another tempo on a pawn move, however, and if Black can seize the initiative White can easily find himself overextended.

5...0-0

Black can also play the immediate 5...c5. This possibility will be discussed further in the introduction to Chapter 7.

6 ♘f3 c5

This has always been the main line. Black is willing to steer the game into a Benoni. The modern option is 6...♘a6.

7 d5

The alternatives 7 ♖e2 and 7 dxc5 are covered in Chapter 7.

7...e6 8 ♖e2

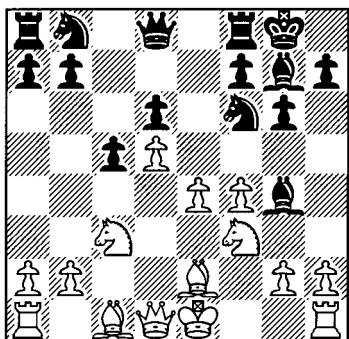
Instead 8 dxe6 looks odd at first, but has had bouts of popularity. This is also in Chapter 7. Once in a while White plays 8 ♙d3. Black can meet this with 8...exd5 9 cxd5 (if 9 exd5 ♜e8+) 9...♙g4 (also possible are 9...b5 or 9...♜e8 10 0-0 c4! with the ideas of 11 ♙xc4 ♘xe4 and 11 ♙c2 b5!). After 10 0-0 (10 h3 ♙xf3 11 ♜xf3 ♘bd7 12 0-0 is the same) 10...♘bd7 11 h3 ♙xf3 12 ♜xf3 a6 13 a4 all of 13...♜c7, 13...♜e8 and 13...♜c8 give Black a decent Benoni.

8...exd5 9 cxd5

Again White can deviate with 9 e5?! or the inconsistent 9 exd5 – again see Chapter 7.

9...♗g4

This move is logical and easy to understand. In Benoni structures, Black has less space, so he wants to initiate exchanges so that all of his minor pieces are not fighting for the d7-square. There is a major alternative in 9...♖e8, while 9...♗bd7 is also playable.



10 0-0

Instead 10 h3 ♗xf3 11 ♗xf3 ♗bd7 12 0-0 transposes to Line C, while 10 ♗d2 ♗xe2 11 ♖xe2 ♖e8 12 0-0 ♗bd7 transposes to Line A, although here Black could also consider 12...♗a6!?

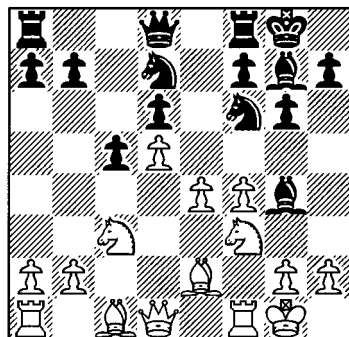
The immediate 10 e5 is not dangerous after 10...dxe5 11 fxe5 ♗xf3 12 ♗xf3 ♗fd7 13 e6 ♗e5 14 0-0 (or 14 exf7+ ♖xf7 15 0-0 ♗bd7 when Black stands well after both 16 d6 ♗xf3+ 17 ♖xf3 ♖xf3 18 ♖xf3 ♖b6 and 16 ♗e2 ♖xf1+ 17 ♖xf1 ♖b6 with the ideas of ...♖f8 and ...c4) 14...fxe6 and here:

a) 15 ♗e4!? ♖xf1+ 16 ♖xf1 ♗g4 (critical, but Black could also try

16...♖h8) 17 g3 ♗xc3 18 bxc3 exd5 and Black is up a couple of pawns, although White has some compensation after 19 ♗g2 ♗c6 20 ♖d1 or even the immediate 19 ♖d1.

b) 15 ♗e3 ♗xf3+ 16 ♖xf3 ♖xf3 17 ♖xf3 exd5 18 ♗xd5 ♗c6 (after 18...♗d7 19 ♖d1 White has the initiative) 19 ♗xc5 (19 ♖f1?! looks insufficient after 19...♗e5 20 ♖e4 ♖d6) 19...♖h8 20 ♖d1 ♖a5 when Black had no problems in

10...♗bd7



Now White has a fairly broad choice. Lines C and D are the most important and they often transpose to one another. We examine:

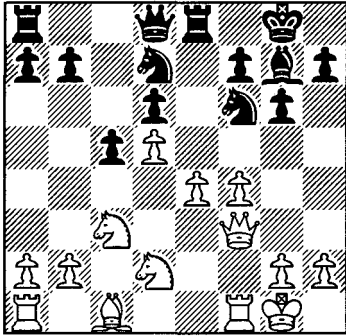
- A: 11 ♗d2**
- B: 11 a4**
- C: 11 h3**
- D: 11 ♖e1**

A) 11 ♗d2

White chooses to exchange light-squared bishops rather than knight for bishop. This plan is slow, however, and

does nothing for White's development.

11...♙xe2 12 ♖xe2 ♜e8 13 ♖f3



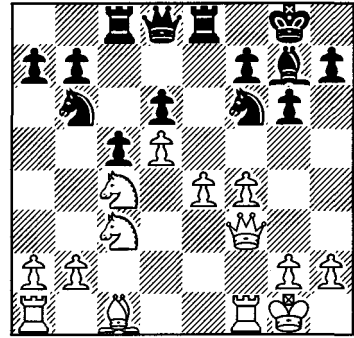
13...♜c8

A good move. Black intends to play ...c4 when the d2-knight will look rather silly. Black can also play 13...a6 14 a4 ♜c8 (another idea is 14...♖c7 15 ♖c4 ♖b6 when 16 ♖xb6 ♖xb6 gives Black's queen access to the weak squares on the b-file) 15 ♖c4 ♖b6 with similar play. However, White could also try 15 a5!?

14 ♖c4

Instead 14 a4 is met with 14...c4, while 14 ♖h1 c4 15 g4 h6!? (instead 15...♖c5 16 e5! dxe5 17 fxe5 ♜xe5 18 ♖xc4 allowed White some counterplay in J.Nogueiras-O.Cvitan, Novi Sad 1990, but 15...♖e7!? is a decent alternative) 16 a4 (instead 16 h4 could be met by 16...h5 17 g5 ♖g4 or simply 16...♖e7) 16...♖e7 17 a5 ♖c5 18 e5 dxe5 19 fxe5 ♖fd7 20 e6 (Black is also much better after 20 ♖xc4 ♖b3 21 ♜a4 ♖xc1 22 ♜xc1 ♜xc4! 23 ♜xc4 ♖xe5) 20...fxe6 21 ♖xc4 ♜f8 gave Black a winning position in O.Sutter-J.Gallagher, Swiss League 2002.

14...♖b6!

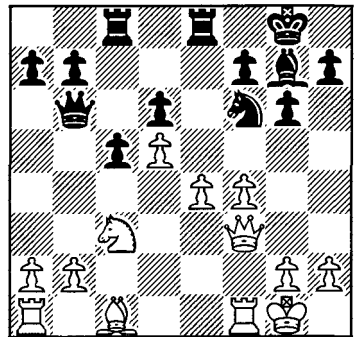


This is a typical Benoni idea to challenge White's well-placed knight.

15 ♖xb6

Instead both 15 ♖a3?! and 15 ♖e3?! are well met by 15...♖e7 when White has difficulties with the e4-pawn: for example, 15 ♖a3?! ♖e7 16 ♜e1 ♖bxd5!. Meanwhile the simplifying 15 ♖xd6?! just leaves White with a disjointed pawn structure after 15...♖xd6 16 e5 ♖d7 17 exf6 ♙xf6 when Black was better in A.Moreto Quintana-G.Timoshenko, Lorca 2007.

15...♖xb6



Black is already very comfortable and

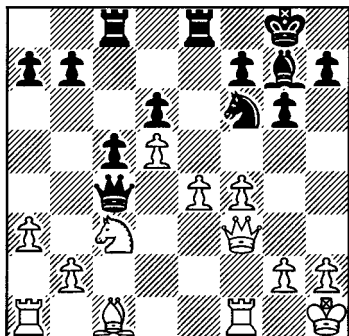
Four Pawns Attack, Main Line: 6...c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♖e2 exd5 9 cxd5

White must be careful just to survive the opening. He has trouble completing his development and must also contend with the possibility of ...♝b4, attacking the e4-pawn.

16 ♖h1

Instead 16 e5 dxe5 17 f5 e4! is nonsense for White, while 16 ♖b1 ♝b4! 17 ♜e1 ♘xe4 (simple, but both 17...♘d5 and 17...♙g4 are also quite good) 18 ♜xe4 ♝xe4 19 ♝xe4 (or 19 ♘xe4 ♝e1+ 20 ♝f1 ♝xe4) 19...♙xc3 leaves Black with a healthy extra pawn. White has also tried 16 f5 ♝b4 17 fxg6 fxg6 18 ♙g5 and now 18...♞f8 was comfortable for Black in B.Khaghani-R.Babaev, Lahi-jan 2005, while 18...♞d4+ 19 ♙e3 ♝c4 is also interesting.

16...♝b4 17 a3 ♝c4



18 e5

This is played out of necessity rather than aggression.

18...dxe5

Instead 18...♘d7 is tempting, but after 19 ♘e4 (19 exd6 f5!) 19...dxe5 rather than 20 ♘d6 e4! 21 ♝d1 ♝d4 when Black will lose the exchange but gain

the advantage, White should play simply 20 f5! with compensation for the pawn.

19 fxе5 ♞xe5 20 ♙f4 ♞eе8 21 ♙g5 ♞e5 22 ♙f4

Not 22 ♙xf6?! ♞f5.

22...♞eе8

Black allows a quick repetition of moves. 22...♞f5 23 g4 does not help matters, but Black could investigate 22...♞xd5!?

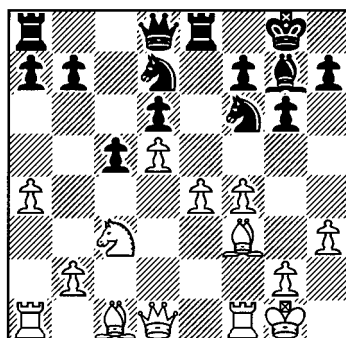
23 ♙g5

And a draw was agreed in W.Junge-G.Traut, correspondence 2006.

B) 11 a4

This move can be a useful waiting move, but this advance does create some weaknesses. Black may be able to avoid playing ...a6 and put the saved tempo to good use. Most players instead prefer to play 11 ♜e1 (Line D) if they do not want to immediately force the pace.

11...♞e8 12 h3 ♙xf3 13 ♙xf3



13...c4!

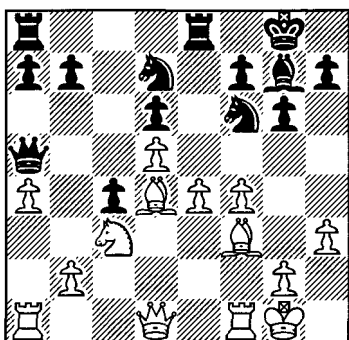
Black has also tried the immediate 13...♝a5, as well as 13...a6 when White

can play in a few different ways such as 14 ♖e1, 14 g4 or 14 a5.

14 ♖e3 ♗a5 15 ♖d4

Instead 15 ♗c2 ♖c5 looks fine for Black and 15 ♖h1 ♖c5 16 e5?! (better is 16 ♗c2 a6, but Black is fine here as well) 16...dxe5 17 fxe5 ♖xe5 18 ♖d4 ♖ee8 19 d6 ♖ce4 gave Black good play in E.Kahn-V.Malada, Budapest 2000.

White could also play 15 ♗e2, hitting the c4-pawn. Now Vaisser recommended 15...♖c5 16 ♗xc4 ♖fxe4 17 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 18 ♖xe4 ♖ac8 19 ♗d3 ♗b4 as being unclear, but after 20 ♖xg6! (not 20 ♖f3? ♖xe3) 20...fxg6 (20...hxg6!?) 21 ♖xa7 ♖xb2 22 ♖ab1 ♗xa4 23 ♖xb2 ♗xa7+ 24 ♖h2 White had a clear advantage in E.Pesonen-A.Busek, correspondence 2000. Instead 15...♖ac8 would run into 16 ♖b5, but Black could try 15...♗b4 16 ♗f2 b6! (and not 16...a6? 17 a5! with the idea of ♖a4).

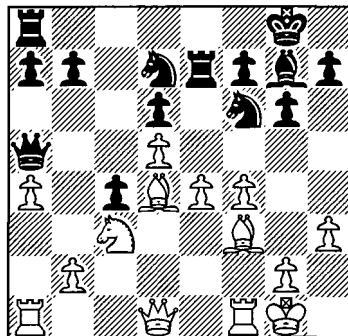


15...♖c5

This is the most-forcing continuation. Black could also play 15...a6, while practice has also seen a couple of rook moves:

a) 15...♖ad8 16 g4 ♖c5 17 g5 ♖h5 18 ♖xh5 ♖xd4+ 19 ♗xd4 ♖b3 20 ♗xc4 ♖xa1 21 ♖d1 ♗b6+ 22 ♖f2 ♗e3 23 ♖g2 ♖c8 with complicated play in J.Fang-A.Peter, Budapest 1996.

b) 15...♖e7 is Black's main alternative. White has:



b1) 16 ♖h2 was suggested by Vaisser, although he gives no advantage for White. This move covers the g3-square to avoid the exchange sacrifice we see in variation 'b21'. After 16...♖c5 (Vaisser's point is that 16...a6 17 g4 ♖ae8 18 g5 ♖xe4 does not work because of 19 ♖xg7 when there is no fork on g3) 17 e5 ♖e8 18 ♖b5 ♖b3 19 exd6 ♖d7 20 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 21 ♗e1 ♗xe1 22 ♖axe1 ♖xd6 23 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 24 ♖e7 ♖d2 was level in I.Hausner-D.Dochev, Pardubice 1994.

b2) 16 ♖h1 is the most common. After 16...a6 there is:

b21) 17 g4 ♖ae8 18 g5 ♖xe4 19 ♖xe4 (not 19 ♖xg7 ♖g3+) 19...♖xe4 20 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 21 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 22 ♗f3 f5 gives Black sufficient play for the exchange.

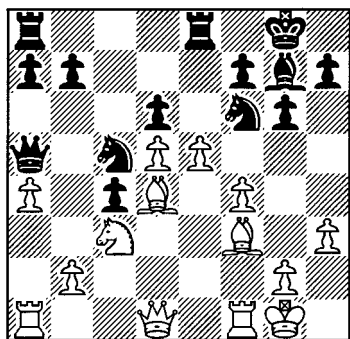
b22) 17 ♗e1!? ♖ae8 18 ♗f2 ♖xe4

Four Pawns Attack, Main Line: 6...c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♖e2 exd5 9 cxd5

(consistent, but White is prepared for this sacrifice) 19 ♖xe4 ♜xe4 20 ♖xe4 ♜xe4 21 ♖xg7 ♜xg7 22 f5 and White had the initiative in J.De Lagontrie-J. Baron, correspondence 1992.

16 e5

As Black was threatening both the e4-pawn and ...♗b3, White must act.



16...♗fd7

Black could also consider 16...dxe5 17 fxe5 ♗fd7 18 e6 ♗e5, because after 19 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 20 exf7+ ♜xf7 White does not have any useful discovered checks.

17 e6 fxe6 18 dxe6

Or 18 ♖xg7 ♜xg7 19 dxe6 (worse is 19 ♜d4+ e5!) 19...♗f6 20 f5 ♗d3 with unclear play in S.Urbanek-D.Vrkoc, correspondence 1999.

18...♗xe6

White has enough play to hold the balance, but no more than that. A couple of examples:

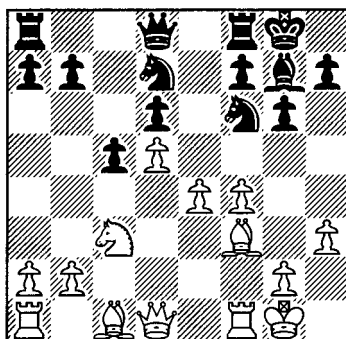
a) 19 ♖d5 ♖xd4+ 20 ♜xd4 and now instead of 20...♜c5? 21 ♜ad1 with a big advantage for White in J.Fang-A.Zapata, Philadelphia 1994, Black could play 20...♗b6! with level play.

b) 19 ♖xg7 ♜xg7 20 ♜xd6?! (many years earlier White had played the superior 20 ♜h1 in I.Hausner-L.Vogt, Czechoslovakia 1978, and here Bologan's 20...♜ad8 21 ♗b5 ♗f6 with equality is probably the simplest) 20...♜ad8 21 ♜ad1 ♗f6 22 ♜e5 ♜b6+ 23 ♜h1 ♗d4 and Black was clearly better in I.Hausner-T.Oral, Czech League 1994.

C) 11 h3

This is the most direct. White gets on with it.

11...♖xf3 12 ♖xf3



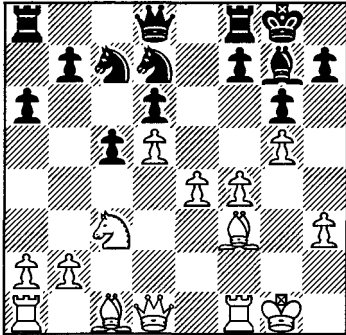
12...♜e8

This is the most popular move. Black has other methods in this structure, most commonly with ...♗e8, but in general I prefer the natural rook move. Some alternatives:

a) 12...c4 is a typical idea, but it is probably premature. Bologan gives the following horrific line: 13 ♖e3 ♜a5 14 ♜e2 (14 ♖d4 is common, while 14 ♜d2 is Semkov's main recommendation) 14...♜ac8 15 g4 ♗c5 16 e5! (16 g5 ♗fd7 17 ♜xc4 runs into the shot 17...♗xe4!)

16...♖fd7 17 e6 ♘b6 18 f5 ♗xc3 19 bxc3 ♜xc3 20 ♗h6 ♜fe8 21 ♗g2 when Black's disgusting position is considered to be quite tenable by my computer.

b) 12...a6 13 g4 (13 a4 and 13 ♗e3 are also possible) 13...♗e8 14 g5 ♖c7 and now:



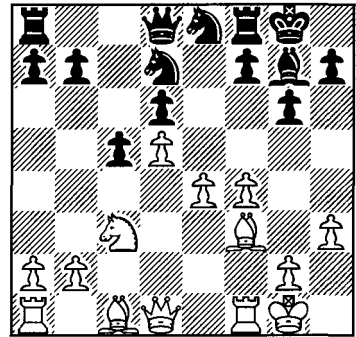
b1) 15 h4 ♗b5 16 ♜d3 can be met with 16...c4!, while 16 ♗xb5 axb5 17 h5 c4 18 ♖g2 ♖c5 19 ♜h1 ♜e8 favoured Black in T.Taylor-J.Banawa, Los Angeles 2011.

b2) 15 ♗g4?! ♗b5 16 e5 ♗xc3 17 bxc3 dxe5 18 f5 e4 19 f6 ♗xf6 20 gxf6 ♗xf6 21 ♗h6 and now the spectacular 21...♜d6!? was played in the well-known game J.Nogueiras-D.Velimirovic, Reggio Emilia 1986, but simpler is 21...♗g7, as pointed out by Semkov. After 22 ♗xg7 ♖xg7 23 d6 f5 Black has a bunch of pawns for a rather useless bishop and 24 ♜d5 can be met with 24...♜h4!.

b3) 15 a4 is Semkov's recommendation. After 15...b5 16 h4 bxa4 17 ♜xa4 (or 17 h5 ♗b5 18 hxg6 hxg6 19 ♗xa4 ♜e8 20 ♖g2 ♗d4 when Black has the initiative according to Semkov) 17...♗b5

18 ♜d3 (or 18 ♗e2 ♗d4!?) 18...♗b6 and now both 19 ♜a2 and 19 ♜a1 are possible, with a complicated game in either case.

c) With 12...♗e8 Black wants to play ...♗c7 and then ...b5 or even ...a6 and ...♗b5. Now 13 ♜e1 is considered under Line D. Others:



c1) 13 g4 ♗c7 14 g5 b5 15 h4 b4 16 ♗e2 ♗b5 17 ♖g2 (Semkov prefers the immediate 17 h5) 17...c4 18 ♜b1 ♜a5 19 h5 ♜xa2 20 ♗e3 ♜fe8 21 hxg6 hxg6 22 ♜h1 ♜ab8 and Black's play was the more advanced in A.Giri-F.Nijboer, Hilversum 2009.

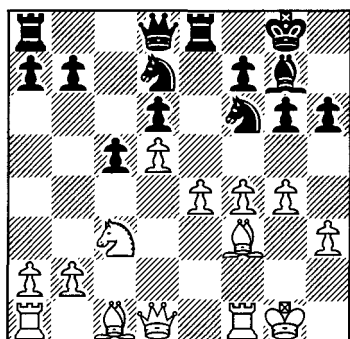
c2) 13 ♗e3 ♗c7 14 ♜d2 (White gets on with his own play; instead 14 a4 a6 15 a5 ♗b5! gives Black counterplay) 14...♜b8 (14...b5 runs into 15 e5) and now Semkov gives the clever 15 ♗e2! b5 16 e5! dxe5 17 f5 with pressure for the pawn.

13 g4

Instead 13 a4 transposes to Line B, while the most-common move is 13 ♜e1 which brings us to Line D. Both 13 ♗e3 and 13 ♖h1 allow 13...b5!, while 13 ♜c2

a6 (13...c4 and 13...♖a5 are also possible) 14 a4 (instead 14 g4 h6 is seen in the notes to White's 14th move, below) 14...c4 15 ♖e3 ♜c8 intending ...♗c5 has done well for Black.

13...h6



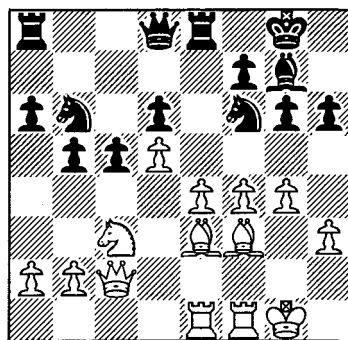
Black does not have a good retreat square for his knight, so he holds up White's advance, gives himself the h7-square and sets a sophisticated positional trap.

14 h4?!

This is the most common, but it runs into a strong retort. Instead the slow 14 ♖e3 and 14 ♖h1 allow 14...b5!. The pawn sacrifice 14 g5 hxg5 15 e5 is tricky, because 15...dxe5 16 fxg5 ♗h7 17 ♗e4 gives White good compensation for the pawn. However, Semkov points out two ways for Black to sacrifice a piece for good play: 15...♗xe5! 16 fxg5 ♜xe5 and 15...♗h7 16 e6 gxf4! 17 exd7 ♜xd7.

14 ♜c2! is Semkov's main recommendation. White overprotects the e4-pawn and intends to pawn storm the kingside: 14...a6 15 ♖e3 (15 h4 allows 15...h5 16 g5 ♗g4, while 15 a4 can be

met by 15...c4) 15...b5 16 ♜ae1 and now 16...♜c8 17 h4 b4 18 ♗d1 c4 19 g5 is Semkov's main line. This not so clear, but Black could also try 16...♗b6!?



This puts some pressure on d5 to discourage the e4-e5 advance and the knight may also hop to c4. Some possibilities:

a) 17 e5 dxe5 18 d6 e4 19 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 20 ♖xe4 ♜c8 21 ♜d1 ♖d4! looks fine for Black.

b) 17 g5 hxg5 18 e5 dxe5 19 f5 (19 fxg5 ♗fxd5) 19...e4 (or 19...b4) 20 ♗xe4 gxf5 21 ♗xg5 ♗bxd5 decimates White's centre.

c) 17 h4 ♗c4 18 ♖c1 h5! 19 gxh5 (if 19 g5 ♗g4) 19...♗xh5 20 ♖xh5 gxh5 21 ♜h2 ♖d4+ 22 ♖h1 ♖h8 with an unclear position.

It is rather early to pass judgement on 14 ♜c2 (or 16...♗b6!?), as there is little practical material and both sides have many possibilities.

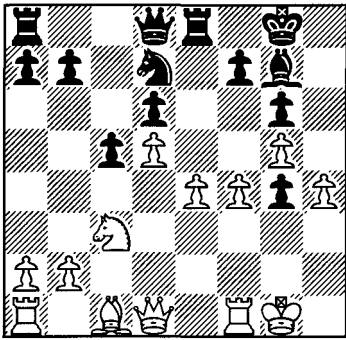
14...h5!

It turns out that White is not so well prepared for the opening of the position.

15 g5

Instead 15 gxh5 ♖xh5 16 ♗xh5 can be met with 16...♞xh4!: 17 ♞g4 (or 17 ♗f3 ♞g3+ 18 ♔h1 ♞h3+ 19 ♔g1 ♗d4+ and wins) 17...♞xh5 18 ♞xd7 (18 ♞xh5 gxh5 leaves Black a pawn up with the better position) 18...♞ad8 19 ♞a4 ♗d4+ 20 ♞f2 ♞f3 21 ♞c2 ♔g7! 22 ♞e2 ♞g3+ 23 ♔f1 ♞h8 0-1 O.Otano-E.Otero, Cuba 1997.

15...♗g4 16 ♗xg4 hxg4



Black leads in development and is prepared to give up his bishop with ...♗xc3 in order to win the e4-pawn because White's dark-squared bishop is locked behind its own pawns.

17 ♞e1

This is the safest move. Other moves can easily lead to trouble for the first player:

a) 17 e5 dxe5 18 ♞xg4 (18 f5 gxf5 19 ♞xf5 e4 also looks good for Black) 18...exf4 19 ♗xf4 ♗d4+ 20 ♔h2 ♗e5 favoured Black in E.Grivas-G.Timoscenko, Plovdiv 1988. White's king position is rather airy.

b) 17 ♞xg4 ♗xc3 18 bxc3 ♞xe4 19

♗d2 c4!? (a drawish ending was reached after 19...♞e7 20 ♞ae1 ♖b6 21 ♞f3 ♞e8 22 f5 ♖xd5 23 fxg6 fxg6 24 c4 ♖e3 25 ♗xe3 ♞xe3 26 ♞xe3 ♞xe3+ 27 ♞xe3 ♞xe3 28 ♞f6 ♔g7 29 ♞xd6 ♞e4 in M.Bach-A.Triscic, Hamburg 1996) 20 ♞ae1 ♗e5 21 ♞g2 ♞xe1 22 ♞xe1 ♖d3 23 ♞e4 ♞c8 24 ♔h2 b5 gave Black good play in G.Kleiser-O.Lehner, Jenbach 2009.

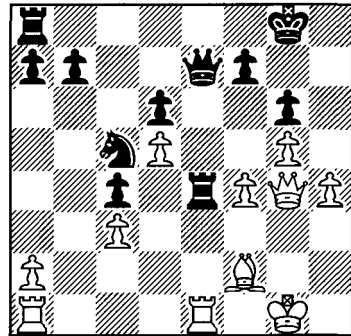
17...c4

Black could also consider 17...♞a5!? 18 ♗d2 c4.

18 ♗e3

White activates his bishop. Instead 18 ♞xg4 would be met with 18...♖c5. Black has good play with ideas like ...♗xc3, ...♖d3 and ...♞a5 followed by ...b5.

18...♗xc3 19 bxc3 ♞xe4 20 ♞xg4 ♞e7 21 ♗f2 ♖c5



22 ♞xe4?!

This is risky, as Black's queen will be well centralized. It is safer to play 22 ♞g2 ♞e8 23 ♞xe4 ♞xe4 24 ♞e1 (not 24 ♗xc5 dxc5 25 ♞xe4 ♞xe4 26 d6 ♔f8 when Black is clearly better) 24...♞xg2+

Four Pawns Attack, Main Line: 6...c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♖e2 exd5 9 cxd5

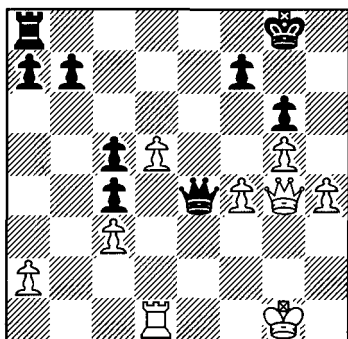
25 ♔xg2 ♜xe1 26 ♙xe1 f5 27 ♗f3 ♘e4
28 ♚e3 b5 when despite Black's optical
advantage, he could not make progress
and the game was soon drawn in
H.Nordahl-R.Vidoniak, Gausdal 2005.

Similar would be 22 ♜f3 ♜e8 23
♜xe4 ♜xe4 24 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 25 ♜e1 when
White should hold.

22...♜xe4 23 ♙xc5?!

With White's king exposed, his
passed d-pawn should not prove to be
dangerous, while Black's pawn majority
can easily advance. Better is 23 ♙d4
when White can hope to generate some
counterplay.

23...dxc5 24 ♜d1



24...♜d8

This is very natural, but White man-
ages to wiggle out. Another idea is
24...♜e8!? to secure the e-file. After 25
d6 ♜e3+ 26 ♔g2 ♜xc3 27 d7 ♜c2+ 28
♔f1 ♜d8 29 f5 and here 29...♜xf5+ 30
♜xf5 gxf5 31 ♚e2 b5 32 ♜d5 gives
White good chances to hold, but Black
could try to press with 29...c3.

25 d6 b5

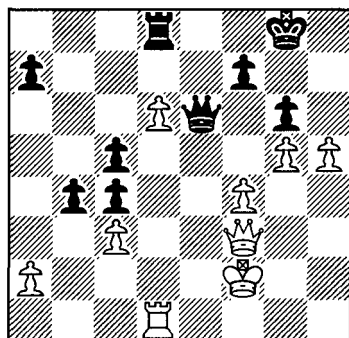
One reason Black needed to control

the e-file is seen in the line 25...♜e3+ 26
♔g2 ♜xc3 27 ♜e2! when the threat of
d7 and ♜e8+ saves White.

26 ♔f2 b4 27 ♜f3 ♜e6

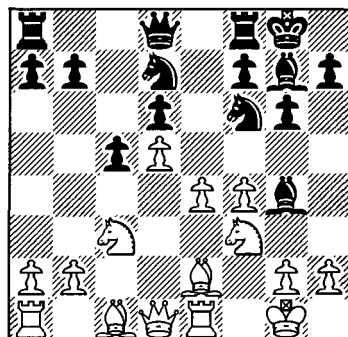
An alternative is 27...♜f5!?

28 h5



Here Black's last chance to play for a
win was with 28...♜d6!? 29 ♜a8+ ♔h7
30 hxg6+ ♔g7!. Instead in B.Kouatly-
S.Kindermann, Tmava 1987, 28...gxh5
29 ♜xh5 ♜d6 30 ♜h1 gave White
enough counterplay to draw.

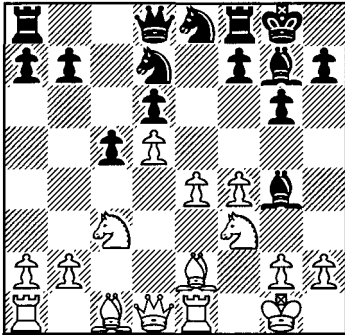
D) 11 ♜e1



This has developed into the main
line.

11...♖e8

Here 11...♘e8!? is also possible.
White has:



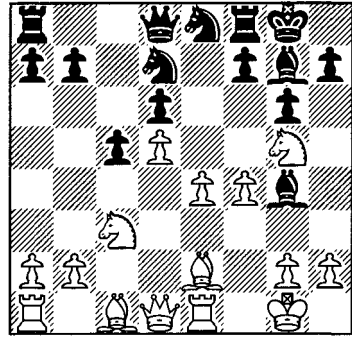
a) 12 h3 was queried by Vaissier. After 12...♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 ♖b8 14 a4 (14 ♗g4?! f5 15 exf5 gxf5 16 ♗e2 a6 17 ♗d3 ♘c7 18 ♖c2 ♖f6 19 ♘e2 ♖be8 gave Black good play in N.Monin-A.Shchekachev, St Petersburg 1994) 14...a6 15 a5 ♘c7 16 ♖d3 b5 17 axb6 ♖xb6 Black is ready for ...♘b5 with counterplay.

b) 12 ♗e3 ♘c7 13 a4 ♖e8 14 ♘d2 ♗xe2 15 ♖xe2 f5 16 ♖d3 fxe4 17 ♘dxe4 ♘f6 18 ♗f2 ♘xe4 19 ♘xe4 ♖d7 20 ♖ad1 ♖f8 21 g3 b6 22 b3 ♖ae8 was fine for Black in H.Cardon-R.Pruijssers, Dutch League 2009.

c) 12 ♘d2 ♗xe2 13 ♖xe2 a6 14 a4 ♗d4+ 15 ♖h1 ♘ef6 16 ♖f3 (if 16 ♘c4 ♘b6) 16...♖e8 17 ♘e2 (Black was doing well after 17 g4 ♖e7 18 g5 ♘h5 19 ♘c4 f6 20 gxf6 ♖xf6 21 ♖f1 ♗xc3 22 bxc3 b5 23 ♘d2 ♖h4 in R.Rain-C.Blanco Gramajo, correspondence 2005) 17...♖e7 18 ♘xd4 cxd4 19 b3 ♘xd5 20 ♗a3 ♘e3 21 ♖ec1 was H.Banikas-A.Beliavsky, Tyniste

1995. Now 21...♘c5 22 e5 ♖e6!? looks best.

d) 12 ♘g5!? tries to punish Black, but it is not so scary.



After 12...♗xe2 13 ♖xe2 ♘c7 14 a4 a6 15 ♖d3 h6 16 ♘f3 b5!? 17 e5 (if 17 axb5 axb5 18 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 and White cannot play 19 ♘xb5? ♖a6) 17...c4 18 ♖c2 ♘c5 (18...dxe5 19 d6 ♘e6 20 fxe5 b4 21 ♘d5 ♘xe5 22 ♖xe5?! ♖xd6 23 ♖e4 was A.Vaissier-I.Nataf, Val d'Isere 2004, and now 23...♖ad8! is strong) 19 axb5 ♘b3 20 ♖a4 axb5 21 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 gave Black good play in O.Killer (a good name for a Four Pawns player!)-A.Kondziela, correspondence 2005.

12 h3

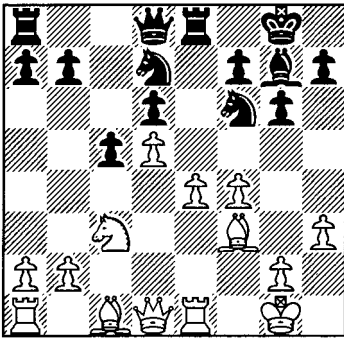
A novel idea is 12 ♗f1!?, intending to recapture on f3 with the queen. Black has:

a) 12...♖c8 13 h3 ♗xf3 14 ♖xf3 a6 15 a4 c4 16 ♗e3 ♘c5 17 ♗f2 ♘b3 (17...♖a5!? looks fine) 18 ♖ad1 ♘d7 19 ♖h1 was B.Jobava-V.Nebolsina, Benidorm 2007. Here Mikhalevski suggests bringing the knight back into play with 19...♘bc5.

Four Pawns Attack, Main Line: 6...c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♖e2 exd5 9 cxd5

b) 12...a6 13 a4 ♘h5! is a nice idea. After 14 h3 ♙xf3 15 ♖xf3 ♗h4 16 ♙e3 (instead 16 ♗d1 ♗g3 17 ♙e2 ♙d4+ 18 ♖h1 ♗xf3 19 ♙xf3 ♙xc3 20 bxc3 ♘g3+ 21 ♖h2 ♘xe4 22 ♗e1 f5 left Black a pawn up in I.Khmelniker-O.Cvitan, Dresden 2007), as in I.Khmelniker-J.Dworakowska, Warsaw 2005, Mikhalievski gives the convincing 16...♗g3! 17 ♗ad1 ♗xf3 18 gxf3 ♙h6 19 ♘e2 f5 20 ♙g2 ♘df6 when Black is much better.

12...♙xf3 13 ♙xf3



13...♗a5

Black activates his queen and prepares both ...b5 and possibly ...c4. This is the main line and now play becomes very sharp. The theory here is very dense, but there is still a lot of scope for original analysis. Despite the popularity of 13...♗a5, to me it is not clear that it is absolutely the best move. There are a few reasonable alternatives and they are worth exploring as well:

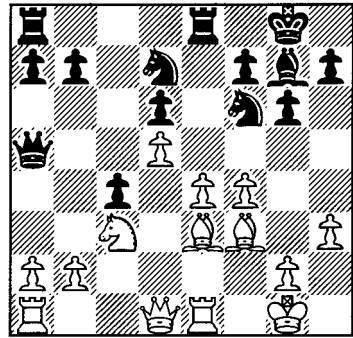
a) 13...♗c8 was played by Kasparov. White has:

a1) 14 ♙e3 b5! 15 ♘xb5 ♘xe4 16 ♙xe4 ♗xe4 17 ♘xd6 ♗xe3 18 ♗xe3 ♙d4

19 ♗f3 ♗b8 20 ♖h2 ♘f6! 21 ♘c4 ♙xe3 22 ♗xe3 ♗xd5 with an equal game in J.Nogueiras-G.Kasparov, Barcelona 1989.

a2) 14 ♖h1 a6 15 a4 c4 16 ♙e3 ♘c5 (the less common 16...♗a5 may be better) 17 ♙xc5 ♗xc5 18 e5 dxe5 19 fxe5 ♘d7 20 e6 ♘e5 21 exf7+ ♖xf7 22 ♘e4 and here Black could consider 22...♗a5!? (22...♗c8 23 ♙g4! ♘xg4 24 ♗xg4 gives White the initiative) 23 d6 ♘d3 24 ♗f1 ♖g8 which is unclear.

b) 13...c4 14 ♙e3 ♗a5 and here:



b1) 15 ♖h1 ♘c5 16 ♙xc5 ♗xc5 17 e5 dxe5 18 fxe5 ♘d7 19 e6 ♘e5 20 ♘e4 ♗b4 21 exf7+ ♘xf7 22 d6 ♗ad8 23 ♗e2 ♗e5 24 a3 ♗b6 25 ♗d2 ♙h6 26 ♗e2 ♙g7 27 ♗d2 ♙h6 was drawn in M.Cebalo-G.Timoscenko, Lido Estensi 2003, but instead of repeating moves Black could try 27...♗b5!?

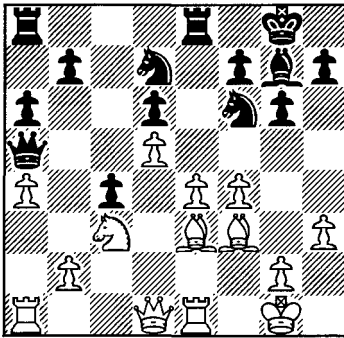
b2) 15 ♙d4 ♘c5 and now 16 b4! is dangerous, but Black may be okay here:

b21) 16...cxb3 is usually played, but it looks inferior to me: 17 axb3 ♗b4 18 ♘a2 ♗b5 (18...♗xb3 19 ♙xc5 ♗xd1 20 ♗exd1 dxc5 21 e5 is better for White; instead Vaisser gives 21 d6, but this just

loses to 21...♖xe4 so perhaps he intended 20 ♖axd1 19 ♙e2 (19 ♖c3 ♗b4 repeats) 19...♗xb3 20 ♙xc5 ♗xd1 (or 20...♗g3 21 ♙f2) 21 ♖axd1 dxc5 22 e5 ♖d7 23 ♙b5 ♖ed8 24 e6 seems good for White.

b22) 16...♗xb4!? 17 ♗b1 ♗a5 18 ♗b5 ♗a6 19 ♙xc5 ♖xe4! (not 19...dxc5 20 e5, as in D.Komarov-Y.Strowsky, Belfort 1992) 20 ♖xe4 ♗xb5 21 ♙f2 ♗a6 (21...♗d7!? with the idea ...b5 looks more natural) 22 ♖e2 was given as favourable for White by Vaisser, even though this looks pretty unclear.

c) 13...a6 14 a4 c4 15 ♙e3 ♗a5 sees Black play in the same vein as variation 'b', but avoids the b2-b4 idea.



White has:

c1) 16 ♙d4?! ♖c5 17 e5 ♖d3! is good.

c2) 16 ♖h1 ♖c5 17 ♙xc5 ♗xc5 18 e5 dxe5 19 fxe5 ♖d7 20 ♖e4 (20 e6 ♖e5 21 exf7+ ♖xf7 is comfortable) 20...♗b4 21 e6 fxe6 (21...♖e5 is also possible; if 22 ♖g5 f5! with sharp play) 22 ♙g4 ♖f8! (22...♖e5 23 ♙xe6+ ♖h8 is also possible, but White should be better here) 23 ♖g5 ♙xb2 24 ♗b1 c3 is very murky.

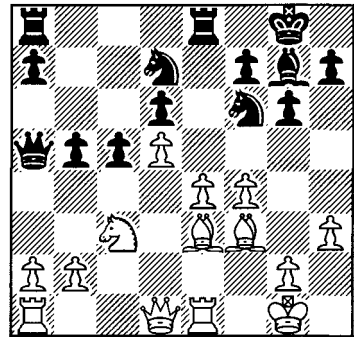
c3) 16 ♗e2 ♖ac8 17 ♗f2 ♖c5 18 ♙xc5 ♖xc5 (instead 18...♗xc5 19 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 20 e5 dxe5 21 fxe5 ♖d7 22 ♖e4 ♖xd5 23 ♖f6+ ♙xf6 24 ♙xd5 was much better for White in J.Lautier-E.Sutovsky, Tilburg 1996) 19 e5 dxe5 20 fxe5 ♖d7 21 e6 fxe6 22 ♖xe6 and here rather than 22...♖f8 23 ♖ae1 with the initiative (Lautier), Black should play 22...♖cc8 when matters are not so clear.

Overall, we can safely say that Black has a lot of interesting possibilities here if the main line becomes too overwhelming.

14 ♙e3

Instead 14 a4 c4! 15 ♙e3 ♖c5 16 ♙xc5 ♗xc5+ 17 ♖h1 ♖d7 is very comfortable for Black, while 14 g4 h6 15 h4 c4 16 g5 hxg5 17 hxg5 ♖h7 18 ♙e3 (bad is 18 ♙g4 ♖c5 19 e5 ♖d3!, S.Barrett-N.Povah, British League 2001) 18...♖c5 19 ♙xc5 ♗xc5+ 20 ♖g2 b5 21 ♖c1 a5 22 ♗e2 a4 23 a3 was A.Vaisser-A.David, French League 1997. Here I think Black should play the useful 23...♖f8!?

14...b5



Instead 14...c4 transposes to note 'b'

to Black's 13th move, above, and Black could also look into Mrdja's 14...♗b6!?. This looks a bit clumsy, but Black intends ...♗c4 or ...♗fd7.

15 a3 ♗b6

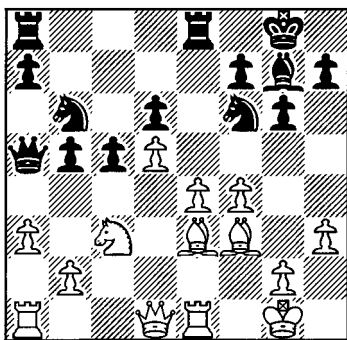
This is Black's final chance to dodge the complications that follow. After 15...b4 16 axb4 ♖xb4 White has several possibilities:

a) 17 ♖e2 could be met by 17...♗b6 or 17...a5.

b) 17 ♖a4 ♖xb2 18 ♖d3 and Black cannot play 18...♗g4?? 19 ♗d1 as in J.Hall-R.Panjwani, Kitchener 2006, but 18...♗h5!? is possible.

c) 17 ♖a3!? ♖eb8!? 18 ♖e2 a5 19 ♖f2 ♗e8 20 ♖h1 ♖a7 21 ♖g3 ♖d4 22 e5 f5 was a highly risky approach in M.Regez-J.Gallagher, Zurich 2003.

d) 17 ♖c2 ♗b6 18 ♖f2 ♗fd7 19 ♖e2 (White could also consider 19 ♖a6 c4 20 ♖ea1 or even 19 e5!? ♖xf4 20 ♖e4), and both 19...a5 and 19...♖d4 are possible.

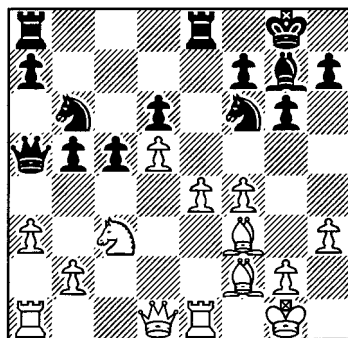


This could be considered the most important position for the Four Pawns. Now White can make a prophylactic move or strike immediately. We have:

D1: 16 ♖f2

D2: 16 e5

D1) 16 ♖f2

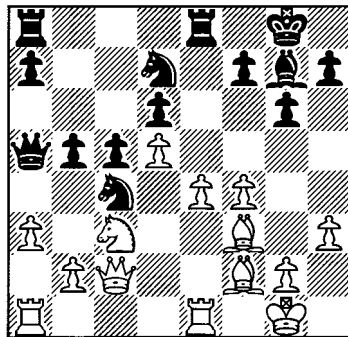


White chooses not to force matters. Now e4-e5 is threatened.

16...♗c4 17 ♖c2

Instead 17 e5 is still playable, although it does not lead to anything after 17...dxe5 (interesting is 17...♗fd7 with the idea 18 e6?! ♗xb2 19 exd7 ♖ed8) 18 fxe5 ♗xe5 19 ♖xc5 ♗fd7 20 ♖f2 and here Black can capture on f3 or play 20...♗c4!?.

17...♗d7



18 ♗e2

Instead 18 e5 dxe5 19 d6 ♖ad8 20 ♗c6 ♗xd6 21 ♖ad1 ♗c7 is fine for Black, while 18 a4 b4 19 ♗b5 a6! 20 ♗xc4 axb5 21 ♗xb5 ♗xb5 22 axb5 ♗xb2 23 ♖xa8 (a better try is 23 ♖a6, but Black is still better after 23...♖xa6 24 bxa6 ♖a8 25 ♗e2 ♗c3 26 ♖b1 ♗f8) 23...♖xa8 24 e5 ♗c3 25 ♖b1 ♖b8 left Black with a clear advantage in M.Cebalo-D.Bojkov, Cetinje 2009.

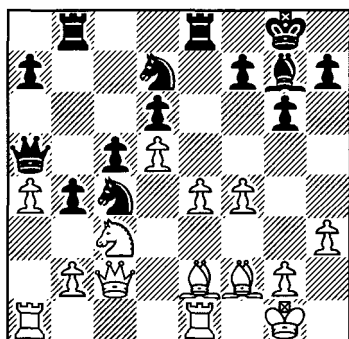
18...♖ab8

Another idea is 18...♗db6!?. After 19 a4 b4 20 ♗b5 b3! 21 ♗xb3 ♗d2 22 ♗c2 ♗xe4 23 ♗c7 ♗xf2 24 ♗xf2 ♗d4+ 25 ♗f1 ♗c4! 26 ♗xc4 ♗xc7 Black had more than enough compensation for the exchange in M.Gessat-T.Habermehl, correspondence 1999.

19 a4

After 19 ♗xb5 Black must avoid 19...♗xb5? because of 20 b4! cxb4 21 ♗xc4, but 19...♗xb5 20 ♗xc4 ♗xb2 is fine for Black.

19...b4!



20 ♗xc4?!

An unfortunate choice. White should

settle for 20 ♗b5 ♗xb2 21 ♗xd6 b3 22 ♗b1 and now:

a) 22...♖ed8 23 e5 ♗xa4?! (Black could try 23...♗d2!? with the idea 24 ♗e4 ♗xf4 25 ♗g3 ♗e3+) 24 ♗d1! ♖b4 25 ♗xb3 ♖db8 26 ♗a2 ♖xb3 27 ♗xa4 ♗xa4 28 ♖xa4 ♗b6 29 ♖xa7 ♗xd5 30 g3 gave White a clear edge in the endgame in M.Cebalo-D.Rasic, Pula 2001.

b) 22...♗xa4 23 ♖a3 (23 ♗xe8? ♗xa1 24 ♗xa1 b2 25 ♗a2 ♗xe1+ wins for Black) and now:

b1) 23...c4 24 ♗xe8?! ♗f8! 25 d6 ♗b4 26 ♖xa4 ♗xa4 27 ♗c7 c3 28 e5 ♗xf4 29 ♗b5? c2 was winning for Black in M.Cebalo-J.Balcerak, Biel 2000. However, Cebalo was willing to enter into this line again, probably because 24 ♗xc4! is a big improvement.

b2) 23...♖ed8 24 ♖xb3 ♗c3 25 ♗c4 (or 25 ♗c2 ♖xb3 26 ♗xb3 ♗b4) 25...♗a6 26 ♖xb8 ♖xb8 27 ♗c2 ♖b4 28 ♗f1 ♖xc4 29 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 30 e5 with approximately equal chances in an unclear position in M.Cebalo-G.Mohr, Rabac 2003. Here 30...♗b6 looks best.

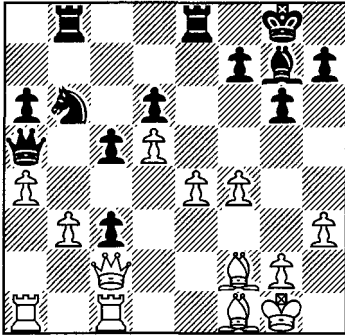
20...bxc3 21 b3 a6!

This is better than 21...♗b6 22 ♗b5 ♖ec8 23 ♖ab1 a6 24 ♗c6 when White's bishop is a nuisance.

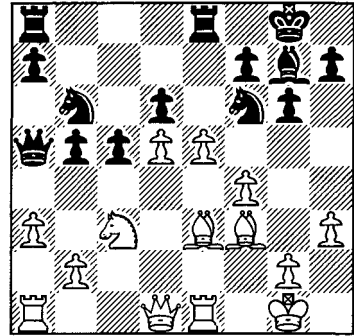
22 ♖ec1

White hopes to play ♗e1. Instead 22 e5 dxe5 23 f5 is not so dangerous. Black could play 23...♗b6 or 23...e4. Konikowski and Soszynski recommended 22 ♗d3 when Black could try 22...♗d4!? with the idea of 23 ♗xd4 cxd4 24 ♗xd4 ♗c5.

22...♗b6 23 ♖f1



D2) 16 e5



23...c4! 24 ♖xc4

Other moves are not much better:

a) 24 b4 is tempting, because after 24...♖xb4 25 a5 ♗d7 26 ♖cb1 the black queen is trapped. However, Nunn gives 26...♖b3! 27 ♖xb3 cxb3 28 ♖d3 c2 29 ♖e1 ♖ec8 and the pawns are overwhelming.

b) 24 bxc4 ♗d7 25 ♖ab1 ♖b2 26 ♖d3 ♗c5 27 ♖xc5 ♖xc5+ 28 ♗h1 ♖eb8 is much better for Black.

24...♗xc4 25 bxc4 ♖b2 26 ♖d3 ♖d2 27 ♖f3 f5! 28 e5

After 28 exf5 Black is spoilt for choice: 28...♖ee2! (other good options are Nunn's 28...gxf5 and Stohl's 28...c2) 29 ♖e1 ♖xg2+ 30 ♖xg2 ♖xg2+ 31 ♗xg2 ♖b4 when Black should easily mop up White's scattered forces.

28...dxe5 29 fxe5 ♖xe5 30 ♗h1 ♖e4 31 ♖e1 ♖c7 32 ♖ab1 ♖de2 33 ♖xc3 ♖2e3 34 d6 ♖xd6 35 ♖b4 ♖c6 36 ♖f1 ♖xh3+! 37 gxh3 ♖e2+

And White had to give up in the instructive encounter Z.Kozul-J.Nunn, Wijk aan Zee 1991.

This is critical and both sides must now tread carefully. Black is not so well prepared for 16...dxe5?! 17 fxe5 ♖xe5 18 ♖xc5, so has an important decision. He can retreat or dive into a position with an interesting material imbalance.

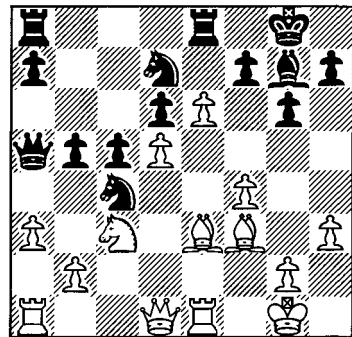
D21: 16...♗fd7

D22: 16...♗c4

D21) 16...♗fd7

This move is considered to be safer, but it is not necessarily better. There is still a lot to explore here.

17 e6 ♗c4



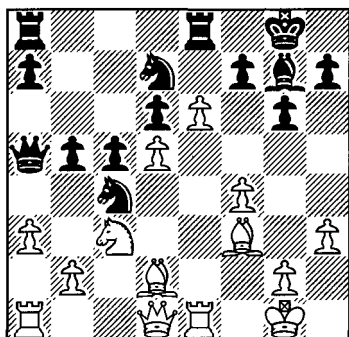
18 exd7

This move is almost always played, but I am not convinced it is White's best. Alternatives are:

a) 18 ♖b3 is not dangerous: 18...♗xe3 19 exd7 ♜e7 20 ♖xb5 ♖b6 can only favour Black.

b) 18 ♖f2 is also wrong: 18...♗xb2 19 exd7 ♜f8! 20 ♖e2 ♖xc3 and again Black is better.

c) 18 ♖d2!? has been played a couple of times without success, but this move has some venom:



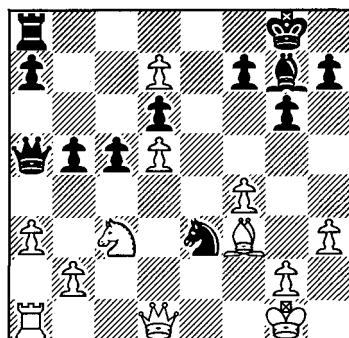
c1) After the obvious 18...♗xd2 19 ♖xd2 ♗b6 20 f5 ♗c4 21 exf7+ (or 21 ♖f4!?) 21...♗xf7 22 fxg6+ hxg6 23 ♖f4+ ♗g8 24 ♜e6 White has the initiative.

c2) In practice Black has preferred to play 18...♗db6. Then 19 f5! (19 b4? cxb4 did not work for White in A.Colson-X.Parmentier, Paris 2006) 19...♖d4+ (instead 19...♗xb2 20 exf7+ ♗xf7 21 fxg6+ hxg6 22 ♖c2 ♜xe1+ 23 ♜xe1 ♗2c4 24 ♖h5! gives White a winning attack: for example, 24...gxf5 25 ♖f5+ ♗g8 26 ♜e7) 20 ♗h1 f6?! was C.Jepson-S.Ganguly, Copenhagen 2010, and here

21 fxg6 hxg6 22 b4! would have caused Black some problems.

c3) I would suggest Black secure his kingside with 18...♗f8 or 18...♗f6 with unclear play.

18...♜xe3 19 ♜xe3 ♗xe3



20 ♖e2

White can also play 20 ♖d3 b4 and:

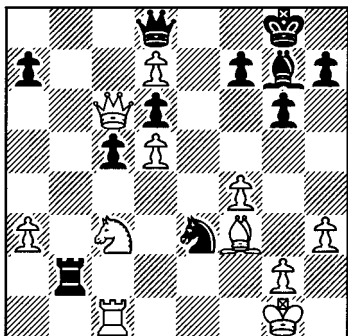
a) 21 ♗b5 bxa3 22 ♜xa3 (22 ♗xa7 ♖xa7 23 ♜xa3 ♖b8 wins for Black) 22...♖e1+ 23 ♗h2 ♗f1+ 24 ♗g1 ♗d2+ 25 ♗h2 ♜d8! 26 ♜xa7 ♖h6 27 ♜a4 c4! 28 ♜xc4 ♗xc4 29 ♖xc4 ♜xd7 is much better for Black, because 30 ♖c8+ ♗g7 31 ♖xd7? loses to 31...♖xf4+.

b) 21 ♖b5 ♖d8 22 axb4 cxb4 23 ♗e4 ♖xb2 24 ♜b1 ♖d4 25 ♗h1 ♜b8! was unclear in E.Mayer-M.Garcia, correspondence 2008.

20...♖d8

Instead 20...b4? is bad after 21 ♗d1, because 21...♗xd1 allows 22 ♖e8+. However, 20...♜d8 is also quite viable: for example, 21 ♗h2 (or 21 ♗xb5 ♗xd7 22 ♖xe3 ♖xb5 23 ♖e8+ ♖f8) 21...♖d4 22 ♗xb5 ♜xd7 was fine in G.Ludden-H.De Vilder, Wijk aan Zee 1999.

21 ♖xb5 ♖b8 22 ♖c6 ♖xb2 23 ♖c1



Now Black can force a draw or see if White will force one himself.

23...♗xc3

The normal move is 23...♖b6, but here White can try 24 ♖b5!? (White can also just force a draw with 24 ♖c8 ♖b8 25 ♖c6 ♖b6) 24...♗xc3 25 dxc6 when 25...a6 (instead 25...♗f8!? is possible, while the oft-recommended 25...♗f6 26 ♖e1 ♗d4 loses to 27 ♖xd4 cxd4 28 ♖c1! ♖c7 29 d8♖+ ♖xd8 30 c7 ♖c8 31 ♗b7; here 26...♖e7 is a better try, but after 27 ♗f2! it is White who is playing for something) 26 ♖xd6 ♖b6 27 ♖e8 ♖b2 28 ♖d1 ♖xd1 29 d8♖ ♗d4+ 30 ♗h2 ♖e3? (30...♖f2 draws) 31 ♖d6+ ♗g7 32 ♖e8+ ♗g8 33 h4! ♖f2 34 ♗h3? (instead 34 ♖f6+ ♗g7 35 ♖h5+ gxh5 36 ♖g5+ ♗f8 37 c7 wins) 34...♖g1 35 ♖d6+ 1/2-1/2 was H.Banikas-V.Kotronias, Korinthos 1998.

With the text move Black takes matters into his own hands.

24 ♖xc3 ♖b1+ 25 ♗f2

Not 25 ♗h2? ♖f1+ 26 ♗g1 ♖h4+ and Black wins.

25...♖f5 26 ♗g4

After 26 ♖c8 ♖b8 Black is better.

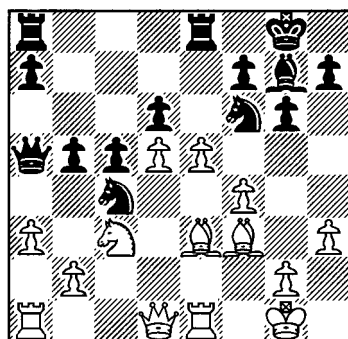
26...♖h4+

Another way is 26...♖e7 27 ♖c8+ ♗g7 28 ♖e8 ♖h4+ 29 g3 ♖xg3 30 ♖xg3 ♖b2+ 31 ♗e2 ♖b3 32 ♗f3 ♖b2+ with a draw.

27 g3 ♖e7 28 ♖c8+ ♗g7 29 ♖e8 ♖b2+

With perpetual check.

D22) 16...♖c4



This is the critical continuation. Black fights for the initiative and an unusual position arises.

17 exf6

This is almost invariably played, but 17 b4!? is quite tricky. Some possibilities:

a) 17...♖xe3 18 bxa5 ♖xd1 19 ♖axd1 dxe5 20 fxe5 ♖d7 21 ♖xb5 (Black holds on after 21 d6 ♖ad8 22 ♖xb5 a6 23 ♖c7 ♖xe5 24 ♖xa6 ♖xe1+ 25 ♖xe1 ♗c3 with equality – Stoica) 21...♖xe5 22 ♗f2 c4 (no better is 22...♖eb8 23 ♗e2 ♖b7 24 d6 c4 25 ♗xc4! ♖xc4 26 d7) 23 ♖c7 ♖d3+ 24 ♖xd3 ♖xe1 25 ♖xa8 ♖e8 26 ♖c7 ♖c8 27 ♖d1 ♖xc7 28 d6 ♖d7 29 ♗c6 ♖d8 30 d7 ♗e5 31 ♗f3 ♗f8 32 ♗e4 f6 33 ♗d5

when White has a slight advantage according to Stoica, but this looks awful for Black.

b) 17...cxb4 18 axb4 ♖xb4 19 ♔d4 (this is the point of White's play: he supports both his knight and the e5-pawn) 19...dxe5 20 fxe5 ♘d7 21 ♖b1 (Black has compensation for the exchange after 21 d6 ♘cxe5 22 ♔xa8 ♖xa8) and here:

b1) 21...♘b2 22 ♘a2 ♖c4 23 ♖xb2! (23 ♔xb2 ♘xe5 24 ♔xe5 ♔xe5 is less clear) 23...♘xe5 24 ♔xe5 ♖xe5 25 ♖be2 ♖ae8 26 d6 and White is clearly better.

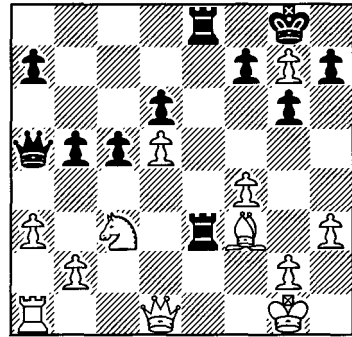
b2) 21...♗f8 22 e6 ♘de5 23 ♘xb5 ♘xf3+ (bad is 23...fxe6 24 ♖f1!, but 23...a6!? 24 ♘c7 ♘xf3+ 25 gxf3 ♖d6 26 ♘xa8 ♖g3+ 27 ♔f1 ♖xh3+ 28 ♔e2, with a mess, is possible) 24 ♖xf3 (if 24 gxf3 fxe6) 24...♔xd4+ 25 ♘xd4 fxe6 26 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 and White is somewhat better, although Black held after 27 ♖xe6 ♖fd8 28 ♖c1 ♘b6 29 d6 ♖ac8 30 ♖c6 ♔f8 31 g4 ♖xc6 32 ♘xc6 ♖d7 33 ♖f6+ with a draw in P.Backe-O.Buessing, correspondence 2000.

Of course there is room for more analysis and it seems that 17 b4!? is not a refutation of Black's play, but it is good to be aware of this possibility.

17...♘xe3 18 ♖xe3 ♖xe3 19 fxg7 ♖ae8

Black has a rook and a pawn (assuming the g7-pawn falls, as we hope!) for two minor pieces. Black's pieces are quite active and he also has a queenside pawn majority. However, White does have four pieces to Black's three, and this may be more important than

Black's extra pawns in a middlegame. Both sides must strive for the initiative because neither king is completely safe.



20 f5

White wastes no time trying to open lines towards the black king. He can also simply complete his development starting with 20 ♖d2!? when Black has a few options:

a) With 20...f5 Black takes the opportunity to block the kingside: 21 ♖f1 (Vaisser suggests 21 ♔f2 with the idea 21...♖e7 22 g4!, but Black can instead play 21...♖b6 22 ♖xe3 ♖xe3 23 ♔xe3 c4+ 24 ♔e2 ♔xg7 with an unclear position) 21...♔xg7 (21...a6 reaches variation 'b') 22 g4 b4 23 ♘d1 ♖b3 (worse is 23...♖e7 24 gxf5 gxf5 25 ♔h5 with good attacking chances for White) 24 gxf5 ♖a4! 25 fxg6 bxa3 26 bxa3 hxg6 27 ♘b2 ♖b5 28 f5 ♖xb2 29 ♖g5 ♖b1 30 ♖xg6+ ♔h8 31 ♖h5+ with a draw in N.Shchebenyuk-M.Bocheva, correspondence 2007.

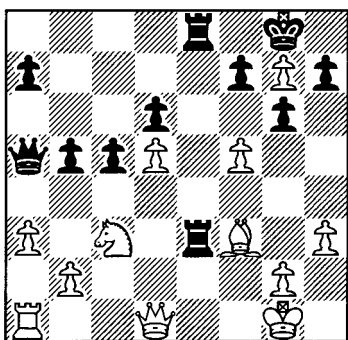
b) 20...a6!? 21 ♖f1 f5 22 g4 ♖d8 23 a4 (there's also 23 gxf5!?, while Stoica recommends 23 ♘d1 ♖e7 24 b4 when

Black should play 24...c4, because 25 gxf5 gxf5 26 ♔h5? loses to 26...♙xg7+ 27 ♕h2 ♖h4) 23...♖h4 24 ♔g2 b4 25 ♘d1 fxg4 26 hxg4 ♙xf3 27 ♙xf3 ♖xg4+ 28 ♕f2 ♖h4+ 29 ♔g2 ♖g4+ and this time Black delivered perpetual check in M.Gluzman-J.Arizmendi Martinez, Bled Olympiad 2002.

c) 20...b4 and now:

c1) 21 ♘d1 allows an awkward check, but Black cannot make much use of it: 21...♙e1+ 22 ♔h2 ♖a6 23 f5 ♔xg7 24 ♖c1!? ♖b6 (or 24...♙8e3 25 axb4 ♖f1 26 ♙a3!) 25 ♖f4 f6 26 fxg6 hxg6 27 ♙c1 looks a bit better for White.

c2) 21 ♘e2 ♖a6 22 ♘g3 bxa3 23 ♙xa3 ♙xa3 24 bxa3 ♖xa3 25 ♘e4 ♖a1+ 26 ♔h2 ♙d8 27 ♖f2 ♔xg7 28 ♖h4 f6 29 ♖g4 f5 30 ♖g5 fxe4? (better is 30...♙f8 31 ♘xd6 ♖f6 32 ♘c4 ♙b8 with chances for both sides) 31 ♖e7+! ♔h6 32 g4 ♖a2+ 33 ♔g3 exf3 1-0 was J.Elbilias-V.Doncea, French League 2008.



20...b4

This is the most popular choice by far, so we will take it as the main line. However, the alternatives are also worth

consideration and I suspect lines 'c' and 'd' offer Black the best chances:

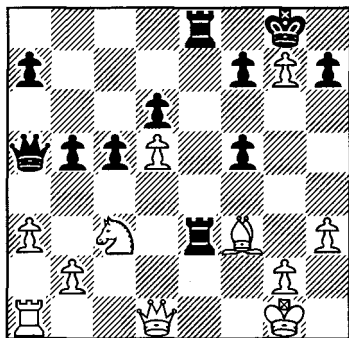
a) 'Winning' the queen with 20...♙e1+ is supposed to be bad, but this move has not been refuted: 21 ♖xe1 ♙e1+ 22 ♙e1 gxf5 23 ♙e7 (Black also drew after 23 ♙e2 ♔xg7 24 ♔f1 b4 25 axb4 cxb4 26 ♘d1 ♖a1 in A.Sanchez Rodenas-A.Civitillo, correspondence 2007) 23...b4 24 axb4 cxb4 25 ♘d1 ♖c5+ 26 ♔h2 ♔xg7 27 ♔h5 ♖xd5 28 ♙xa7 ♖e5+ 29 ♔h1 ♖e1+ and 1/2-1/2 was M.Morss-B.Jones, correspondence 2007.

b) The little move 20...a6 is very useful, if indeed Black has time for it. After 21 ♖d2 (instead 21 f6? ♖d8 22 ♘e4 ♙8xe4 23 ♔xe4 ♖xf6 24 ♔c2 ♖xb2 was just winning for Black in J.Segura Ariza-J.Moreno Carnero, Ayamonte 2002) 21...♖d8 (maybe Black should try 21...gxf5!?) 22 ♙f1 (not 22 ♘e4?! ♙3xe4 23 ♔xe4 ♙xe4 24 ♙f1 when 24...♖f6 favoured Black in A.McDonagh-D.Flude, correspondence 2006, while 24...gxf5 25 ♙xf5 ♖e7 or 24...♔xg7 may be even stronger) 22...♔xg7 23 ♔g4! ♙8e5 24 ♖f2 White had the initiative in C.Philippart-F.Raimbault, correspondence 2006.

c) 20...♔xg7!? is untried in practice, but it looks quite good. Glek gave 21 f6+ (?) 21...♔xf6 22 ♘e4+ ♔g7 (after 22...♙3xe4 23 ♔xe4 ♙xe4 24 ♖f3+ ♔e5 Glek suggests 25 b4!? with compensation; of course this looks risky for Black, but I do not see any refutation) 23 ♖c2 with the ideas of ♘d6 or ♔f2, trapping the rook. However, Black can simply play

23...♖e1+ 24 ♜xe1 ♜xe1+ 25 ♔h2 ♜e3 when White cannot take on d6 and Black is much better.

d) 20...gxf5!? is a radical solution, but it makes sense. Black is well centralized, so he just takes the pawn. Of course opening up the kingside is not without risk.



After 21 ♜d2 b4 (bad is 21...c4?! 22 ♜f1, but 21...a6!? is possible) 22 ♘e2 c4 23 ♘g3 c3 24 bxc3 bxc3 White has tried:

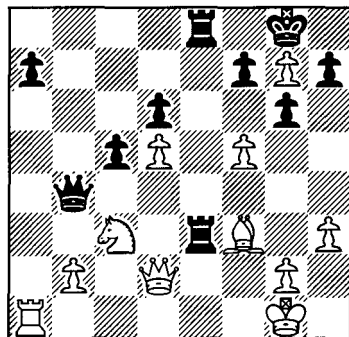
d1) 25 ♜f2 ♜b6 26 ♔h2 ♜d4 (also possible is 26...♜b2!?) 27 ♘h5 ♜c8 28 ♜c1 ♜e5+ 29 ♜g3 c2 30 ♜xe5 was S.Ernst-A.Baldus, Vlissingen 2001. Now 30...♜xe5! would give Black his share of the play in a double-edged ending.

d2) 25 ♜c2 ♜b6 26 ♔h2 ♜e1 (but not 26...♜b2?! 27 ♜a2 ♜b6? 28 ♘xf5 which was winning for White in A.Vaisser-J.Yrjola, Helsinki 1991) 27 ♜xe1 ♜xe1 with unclear play in K.Meyer-A.Baldus, correspondence 1998.

21 axb4 ♜xb4 22 ♜d2

White can also exchange pawns immediately with 22 fxg6 hxg6 23 ♜d2, but Black could then consider 23...♜f4!?

(23...♜h4 is the main line) 24 ♜f1 ♔xg7 25 ♘d1 ♜3e4 26 ♜c3+ ♜d4 and here a draw was agreed in this unclear but balanced position in J.Mercadal Benejam-F.Seres, correspondence 1997.



22...♜h4

Here too 22...♜f4!? is possible. After 23 ♜f1 gxf5!? (not 23...♜xf5? 24 ♔e4) 24 ♔g4?! (24 ♘b5 is a better try) 24...♜d4 Black won material in R.Rain-U.Mesquita, correspondence 2005.

23 fxg6

Another idea is 23 ♜f1 gxf5 24 ♘b5 ♜e7 25 ♘a3!?, but instead of 23...gxf5, Black could try 23...♜e1!?

23...hxg6 24 ♘b5!

This active move has scored well for White in some correspondence games, but the latest evidence suggests that Black can hold the position.

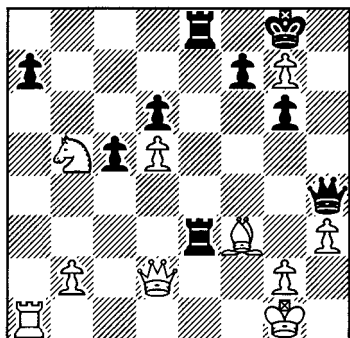
The alternatives do not impress:

a) 24 ♜xa7? ♜xf3 25 gxf3 ♜g3+ 26 ♔f1 ♜xf3+ 27 ♔g1 ♜g3+ 28 ♔f1 ♜xh3+ 29 ♔g1 ♜g3+ 30 ♔f1 ♜e3 wins for Black.

b) 24 ♜a4 ♜g3 (or 24...c4!?) 25 ♘e2 ♜e5 gives Black good play.

c) 24 ♜f1 a6! 25 ♘d1 (Black was also

doing well after 25 ♖f2 ♗d4 26 ♘h1 ♜3e5 27 ♗xd4 cxd4 28 ♘d1 d3 in V.Malinin-M.Blokh, correspondence 1993) 25...♜3e5 26 ♘f2 f5! with a good game for Black in H.Banikas-J.Gallagher, French League 2001.



24...♜xf3!

This looks best, even though Black will be playing for a draw. Alternatives.

a) 24...♜8e7 25 ♜f1 ♗f4 26 ♘a3 ♗h4 27 ♗f2 ♗f4 28 ♖g4 ♗xf2+ 29 ♘xf2 ♜3e4 30 ♜c1 f5 31 ♖f3 ♜d4 32 ♘c4 and White was better in R.Rain-D.Hernandez Molina, correspondence 2005.

b) 24...♜8e5 25 ♜f1 ♗g5 26 ♗f2 ♜f5 27 ♘h1 ♗e7 28 ♗d2 ♜fe5 29 ♘a3 ♗h4 30 ♗f2 ♗xf2 31 ♜xf2 ♜e1+ 32 ♘h2 ♜e7 33 ♘c4 ♜d7 34 ♜c2 gave Rain a similar advantage in R.Rain-J.Diani, correspondence 2008.

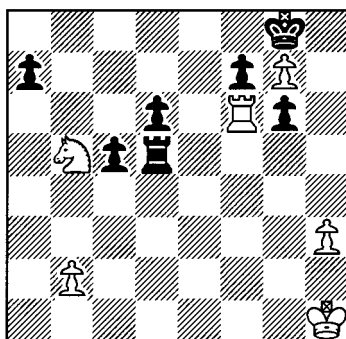
c) 24...♗g3 25 ♜f1 ♘g7 26 ♘xa7 ♜e1 27 ♘b5 ♜xf1+ 28 ♘xf1 ♜a8 29 ♖d1 ♜a1 30 ♗c3+ ♗xc3 31 ♘xc3 and having exchanged rooks, this ending looks ten-

able for Black, but White eventually squeezed out a win in J.Mercadal Benejam-W.Nitsche, correspondence 1997.

25 ♗xf3 ♜e5 26 f4

Better than 26 ♘h2 ♜h5 27 ♗g2 ♗f4+ 28 ♘h1 ♜xd5. Now Black initiates a fairly forced sequence:

26...♗g3+ 27 ♗g2 ♗xf4 28 ♜f1 ♗e3+ 29 ♘h1 ♖g5 30 ♗f3 ♗xf3+ 31 ♜xf3 ♜xd5 32 ♜f6



32...♜d3

32...♜d1+ 33 ♘g2 ♜d2+ 34 ♘f3 d5 35 ♘d6 ♘xg7 36 ♜xf7+ ♘h6 37 ♜xa7 ♜xb2 also looks tenable.

33 ♘g2

Or 33 ♘xd6 ♜xh3+ 34 ♘g2 ♜b3 35 ♜xf7 ♜xb2+ 36 ♘f3 ♜d2 37 ♜d7 ♜d4 and White cannot make progress.

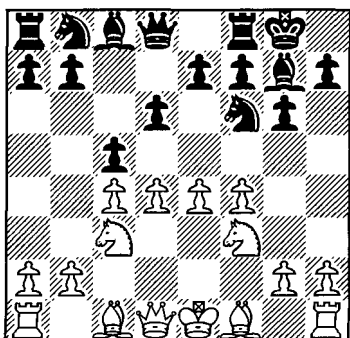
33...♘xg7 34 ♜f3 ♜d2+ 35 ♜f2 ♜d3 36 ♘xa7 f5 37 ♘c6 ♘f6 38 ♖4 g5 39 ♖5 ♜b3 40 ♜d2 ♘e6 41 ♘d8+

And White finally gave up the draw in J.Mercadal Benejam-S.Khlusevich, correspondence 2000.

Chapter 7

Four Pawns Attack, Other Lines

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗c3 ♙g7 4 e4 d6 5 f4
0-0 6 ♗f3 c5



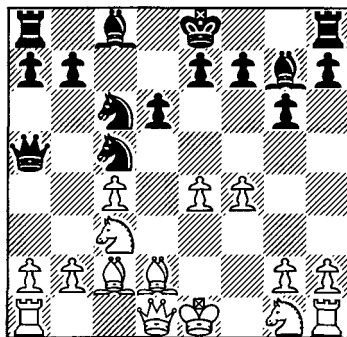
In this chapter we look at the lines where White avoids the main line 7 d5 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 cxd5.

- A: 7 ♙e2
- B: 7 dxc5
- C: 7 d5 e6 8 dxe6
- D: 7 d5 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 e5
- E: 7 d5 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 exd5

Lines B and C are the most danger-

ous and they were both recommended by Glenn Flear in *Dangerous Weapons: The King's Indian*. Lines A and E are not very threatening if Black is well prepared, while D is probably just bad for White.

I should also note that Line B can be avoided by playing 5...c5 (instead of 5...0-0), because 6 dxc5 ♜a5 7 ♙d3 can be met by 7...♗fd7! (7...♜xc5 would head back into Line B), as Flear points out. After 8 ♙d2 ♗xc5 9 ♙c2 ♗c6 White has:

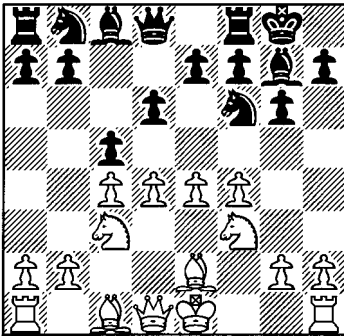


a) 10 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{g}4$ 11 $\text{d}5$ $\text{d}8$ 12 $\text{c}3$ $\text{xc}3+$ 13 $\text{d}xc3$ e5! gave Black a fine position in G.Flear-R.Damaso, Ciudad Real 2004.

b) 10 $\text{d}5$ $\text{d}8$ 11 b4!? (11 $\text{c}3$ $\text{xc}3+$ 12 $\text{d}xc3$ 0-0 is at least equal for Black) has scored well for White, although Black should be okay after 11... $\text{d}7$ with the idea of ... $\text{b}6$.

I have decided to cover Line B anyway, however, as for some reason I find 5...0-0 more principled (even if it could be argued it is not as good!), and I think it is useful to understand the positions that arise after the exchange on c5.

A) 7 $\text{e}2$

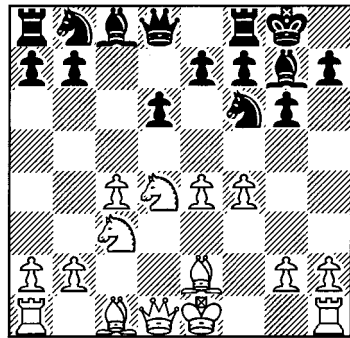


White 'forgets' to play 7 d5. This line leads to a Maroczy Bind where White has played f2-f4 very early. This approach was advocated by Tim Taylor in *Beating the King's Indian and Grünfeld*. It is a solid line for White and does contain some venom, but it should not be too dangerous for Black if he understands the positions that arise.

7... $\text{cxd}4$

Instead 7... $\text{g}4$ would be worth considering if White just transposed to the main lines with 8 d5 e6 9 0-0 exd5 10 cxd5, but both 10 exd5 and especially 9 dxe6! would have to be considered.

8 $\text{dxd}4$



8... $\text{d}c6$

This is the natural move, but Black can also consider 8... $\text{a}6!$? to stir up some trouble. The knight will head to c5 to attack the e4-pawn which can no longer be defended with the natural f2-f3. White has:

a) 9 0-0 $\text{c}5$ 10 $\text{f}3$ $\text{b}6$ 11 e5 dxe5 12 fxe5 $\text{d}e6$ (this was not mentioned by Taylor, who only gives 12... $\text{d}fd7$ 13 $\text{d}5$ $\text{d}8$ 14 $\text{g}5$ $\text{e}8$ 15 $\text{b}3$ $\text{d}e6$ 16 $\text{h}4$ $\text{xe}5$ 17 $\text{e}2$ when White had compensation for the pawn in A.Bisguier-P.Hummel, Los Angeles 1996) 13 $\text{e}3$ (not 13 exf6? $\text{xf}6$) 13... $\text{d}d7$ 14 $\text{d}5$ $\text{d}8$ 15 $\text{g}4$? (better is 15 $\text{d}xe6$ fxe6 16 $\text{d}c3$ $\text{d}xe5$ when White has enough for the pawn, but no more) 15... $\text{d}xe5$ 16 $\text{xe}6$ $\text{xe}6$ 17 $\text{d}xe6$ fxe6 18 $\text{xf}8+$ $\text{xf}8$ 19 $\text{d}4$? $\text{d}c6$ 0-1 W.Heinrich-A.Schwarz, correspondence 1997.

b) 9 ♙e3 ♜c5 10 ♙f3 $\text{♙h6!?$ leads to complicated play:

b1) 11 ♜c2 e5 12 fxe5 (12 f5 ♙e3 13 ♜xe3 a5 is unclear) 12... ♙e3 13 ♜xe3 dxe5 is fine for Black.

b2) 11 ♜b3 e5 12 ♜xc5 exf4 13 ♙f2 dxc5 14 ♙xc5 (White goes for material, as 14 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 15 ♙xc5 ♙g7 gives Black good play) 14... ♜d7! (not 14... ♞e8? 15 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 16 ♙e7) 15 ♙xf8 ♜h4+ 16 ♚d2 ♙xf8 and Black had a strong attack, G.Stahlberg-L.Stein, Yerevan 1965.

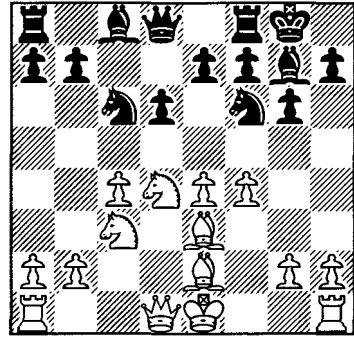
b3) 11 0-0 e5 12 ♜db5 ♜e6 13 ♜xd6 a6! 14 ♙b6 ♜d7 is unclear: for example, 15 ♜a3 (or 15 ♜d5 ♜xd5 16 ♜xd7 ♜xb6! 17 ♜e7 axb5 18 f5 ♙g5 19 ♜b4 ♜d4 20 c5?! ♜c4 21 b3? ♙d2 0-1 P.Stokstad-A.Lesiege, Parthenay 1992) 15... ♜c6 16 c5 ♙xf4 17 b4 axb5!? 18 ♜xa8 ♜d4 19 a4 ♙g4 with a mess in J.Wallner-L.Scheidig, correspondence 2006, and here 19... ♜e6 20 axb5 ♜c4 is also possible.

9 ♙e3

Instead 9 ♜c2 is well met by 9... ♜d7! . This is the typical response to 9 ♜c2 in the Accelerated Dragon where White has played 0-0 instead of f4 and here it is even stronger:

a) 10 ♙d2?! ♜c5 11 0-0 (11 ♙f3? ♜d3+) 11... ♙xc3 12 ♙xc3 ♜xe4 13 ♙e1 ♜b6+ 14 ♚h1 ♜xb2 and White does not have enough for two pawns.

b) 10 0-0 ♜c5 11 ♙f3 $\text{♙xc3!?$ (11...f5 and 11... ♙e6 are good alternatives) 12 bxc3 ♜a5 with ideas like ... ♙e6 and ... ♜a4 gives Black good play against White's doubled pawns.



This position could also arise from an Accelerated Dragon: 1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 g6 5 c4 ♙g7 6 ♙e3 ♜f6 7 ♜c3 0-0 8 ♙e2 d6 if White now played 9 f4 instead of the standard and more flexible 9 0-0.

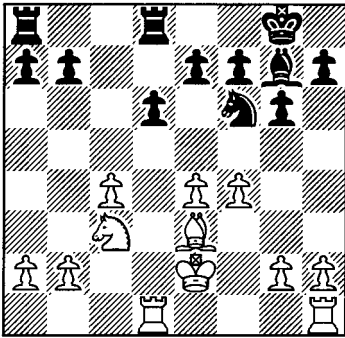
9... ♙d7

Black chooses to play a positional middlegame. He also has a couple of ways to force simplification. These continuations are sound enough, but they are not very enterprising:

a) 9... ♜g4 10 ♙xg4 ♙xd4 11 ♙xd4 ♙xg4 12 ♜xg4 (after 12 ♜d2 ♜xd4 13 ♜xd4 e5! 14 fxe5 ♜h4+ White should avoid 15 g3 dxe5 16 ♜xe5 ♜h3 when Black has the initiative, and instead play 15 ♜f2 ♜xf2+ 16 ♙xf2 dxe5 17 ♞ac1 ♞ad8 18 ♜d5 ♙e6 19 ♞hd1 f5 20 exf5 gxf5 with an equal ending in W.Uhlmann-R.Fischer, Leipzig Olympiad 1960) 12... ♜xd4 13 ♜d1 and White is a little better after both 13...e5 14 0-0 ♞c8 15 b3 and 13... ♜c6 14 0-0 ♜b6+ 15 ♞f2 ♜c5 16 b3.

b) 9... ♙g4 10 ♜xc6 (instead 10 ♙xg4 ♜xg4 11 ♜xg4 ♜xd4 12 ♜d1 ♜c6 is fine

for Black: for example, 13 ♖c1 ♜a5 14 a3 ♜a6! 15 ♜e2 ♜ac8 with counterplay in H.Heemsoth-Christensen, correspondence 1965) 10...♙xe2 11 ♗xd8 ♙xd1 12 ♜xd1 (not 12 ♗xb7? ♙c2) 12...♜fxd8 13 ♙e2.



The endgame looks safe enough, but in reality Black must be careful:

b1) 13...♗d7 14 ♙d4 ♙xd4 15 ♜xd4 leaves White with a small but pleasant edge because of his space advantage.

b2) 13...♗g4 14 ♙d4 e5 (after 14...♙xd4 15 ♜xd4 the black knight may as well have gone to d7) 15 fxe5 dxe5 16 ♙c5? ♜dc8 17 ♙a3 ♜xc4 18 ♜d7 was Penttinen-Tuominen, correspondence 1991. Here 18...♗f6 is just good for Black: for example, 19 ♜xb7 ♗xe4 20 ♗d3? ♜xc3+ 21 bxc3 ♗f2+. However, Taylor's suggestion 16 ♙e3 ♗xe3 17 ♗xe3 ♜d4 18 b3 f5 19 exf5 gxf5 20 ♗d5 gives White an edge.

b3) 13...♜dc8 14 c5! (instead 14 b3 b5 gives Black counterplay) and now:

b31) 14...dxc5 15 e5 ♗g4 16 ♜d7 wins back the pawn and maintains some advantage.

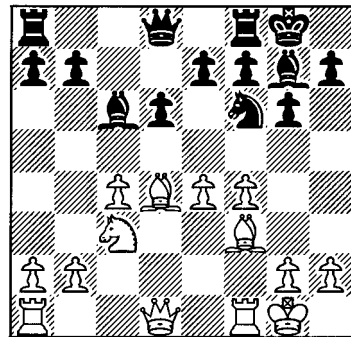
b32) 14...♗e8 15 cxd6 ♗xd6 16 e5 ♗c4 17 ♜d7 ♗xb2 (Black had big problems after 17...♗xe3 18 ♗xe3 b5 19 ♜hd1 e6 20 ♜b7 in W.Martz-P.Smith, US Championship, Ventura 1971) 18 ♜b1 (18 ♜c1! looks even stronger) 18...♜xc3 19 ♜xb2 b6 20 ♜xe7 and again White was better in J.Pribyl-H.Westerinen, Tallinn 1973.

b33) 14...♗g4 15 cxd6 (not 15 ♗d5 ♗xe3 16 ♗xe3 ♜xc5 17 ♗xe7+ ♗f8 18 ♗d5 ♙xb2 when Black was better in F.Eastwood-J.Suto, correspondence 1998, as 19 ♜b1 is just met by 19...♜c2) 15...♗xe3 16 ♗xe3 exd6 17 ♗d5 with an edge for White in B.Malich-L.Stein, Berlin 1962, and S.Marjanovic-V.Iordachescu, Bucharest 2000. Although Black managed to draw both these games, the endgame is clearly unpleasant.

10 0-0 ♗xd4

This is a standard operation in the Maroczy Bind. Exchanges give Black more room for his pieces and he also prepares to offer an exchange of dark-squared bishops.

11 ♙xd4 ♙c6 12 ♙f3



12...a5

This is another standard move in the Maroczy. Black intends ... d7 and therefore secures the c5-square. Black can also play the immediate $12... \text{d7}$ $13 \text{ e} \times \text{g7}$ $\text{c} \times \text{g7}$ which is likely to transpose to the main line after $14 \text{ c} \times \text{h1}$ a5 15 b3 , as 14 b4? fails to $14... \text{b6+}$. Instead 14 d4+ $\text{c} \times \text{g8}$ ($14... \text{f6}$ $15 \text{ c} \times \text{h1}$ $\text{b} \times \text{b6}$ 16 d2 a5 17 d5! $\text{e} \times \text{d5}$ 18 exd5 $\text{b} \times \text{b4}$ 19 e2 looks good for White) $15 \text{ c} \times \text{h1}$ a5 transposes to note 'c' to White's 13th move, below.

13 b3

Now White can meet ... a4 with b3-b4 . There are several other options:

a) 13 c5 dxc5 was drawn here in W.Martz-T.Petrosian, Lone Pine 1976. After $14 \text{ e} \times \text{c5}$ $\text{c} \times \text{c7}$ the position is level, though dull. This might be an argument for preferring $12... \text{d7}$.

b) 13 d5 d7 $14 \text{ e} \times \text{g7}$ $\text{c} \times \text{g7}$ 15 d4+ can be met with $15... \text{e5!}$? ($15... \text{f6}$ and $15... \text{c} \times \text{g8}$ are also possible), and Black gets the e5-square for his knight. If 16 c6 $\text{e} \times \text{d5}$ 17 exd5 (or $17 \text{ b} \times \text{d5}$ $\text{c} \times \text{f3}$ $18 \text{ b} \times \text{f3}$ dxc5 $19 \text{ c} \times \text{c5}$ $\text{e} \times \text{c8}$), then $17... \text{b} \times \text{f6!}$.

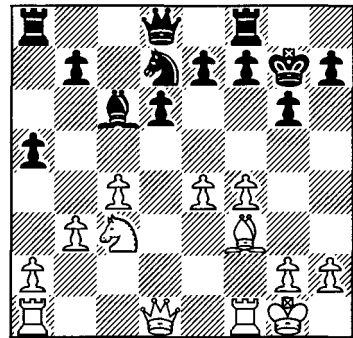
c) $13 \text{ c} \times \text{h1}$ d7 $14 \text{ e} \times \text{g7}$ $\text{c} \times \text{g7}$ 15 d4+ f6 (or $15... \text{c} \times \text{g8}$) $16 \text{ e} \times \text{g4}$ $\text{b} \times \text{b6}$ 17 d2 $\text{d} \times \text{c5}$ is level. After 18 d5?! $\text{c} \times \text{e4!}$ $19 \text{ c} \times \text{b6}$ $\text{c} \times \text{d2}$ 20 ffe1 $\text{e} \times \text{ae8}$ $21 \text{ e} \times \text{e6}$ f5 Black was up a healthy pawn in R.Marszalek-A.Sznapiak, Warsaw 1979.

d) $13 \text{ e} \times \text{e2!}$ e5 ($13... \text{d7}$ 14 e5! ?) $14 \text{ e} \times \text{e3}$ (14 fxe5 d7!) $14... \text{exf4}$ $15 \text{ e} \times \text{f4}$ $\text{e} \times \text{e8}$ $16 \text{ e} \times \text{ad1}$ $\text{c} \times \text{e4!}$ $17 \text{ c} \times \text{e4}$ f5 $18 \text{ e} \times \text{d6}$ $\text{c} \times \text{c8}$ and Black had no problems in

D.White-W.Brandhorst, correspondence 2007.

e) $13 \text{ f} \times \text{f2}$ a4 (this looks to take advantage of White's omission of b2-b3 , but $13... \text{d7}$ was entirely possible) 14 b4 (or $14 \text{ d} \times \text{d2}$ $\text{d} \times \text{d7}$ $15 \text{ e} \times \text{g7}$ $\text{c} \times \text{g7}$ with a level game in A.Kapetanovic-M.Petursson, New York 1987) $14... \text{axb3}$ 15 axb3 $\text{e} \times \text{a1}$ $16 \text{ b} \times \text{xa1}$ e5! (Black again finds a way to get the e5-square for his pieces) 17 fxe5 d7 $18 \text{ d} \times \text{d5}$ $\text{e} \times \text{e5}$ $19 \text{ e} \times \text{e5}$ $\text{c} \times \text{e5}$ and Black had a good position in M.Avotins-C.Mokrys, correspondence 2006.

13...d7 14 e x g7 c x g7



15 c h1

White wants to keep queens on the board. Instead 15 d4+ f6 (after $15... \text{c} \times \text{g8}$ 16 e5! ? dxe5 17 fxe5 $\text{b} \times \text{b6}$ $18 \text{ b} \times \text{b6}$ $\text{c} \times \text{b6}$ $19 \text{ e} \times \text{c6}$ $\text{b} \times \text{c6}$ Black can only hope to make a draw) $16 \text{ e} \times \text{ac1}$ $\text{e} \times \text{e8}$ (Black could also play the immediate $16... \text{b} \times \text{b6}$) $17 \text{ e} \times \text{fd1}$ $\text{b} \times \text{b6}$ $18 \text{ b} \times \text{b6}$ $\text{c} \times \text{b6}$ 19 d5 $\text{e} \times \text{d5}$ 20 exd5 d7 was equal in W.Kund-M.Dos Santos, correspondence 2006. Without queens on the board, Black can easily guard the e7-pawn with

his king and his knight is at least as strong as White's bishop.

15...♖b6

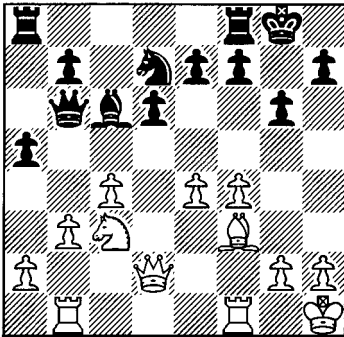
Instead 15...♖c8 looks a bit out of place: 16 ♖e1 (or 16 ♗g4!? to capture the knight) 16...♗c5 17 ♗d4+ ♖g8 18 ♗d5 gave White a slight edge in M.Krasenkow-A.Evdokimov, Helsingor 2008, although Black went on to win.

Black could also consider the prophylactic 15...♖g8!?

16 ♗d2 ♖g8

This is sensible, but 16...♗c5 and 16...♖fe8!? were alternatives.

17 ♖ab1



17...♗c5

From here Black seems to drift a bit. Black's knight would really like to have this square, so again 17...♗c5 and 17...♖fe8 were possibilities. Another idea is 17...♗b4 to hinder White's ♗c3-d5. There is no reason to fear 18 e5 dx e5 (or 18...♖ad8 19 exd6 ♗f6) 19 ♗xc6 bxc6 20 ♗xd7 ♗xc3 21 fx e5 e6: for example, 22 ♖fe1 a4 with counterplay.

18 a4!?

This is an interesting strategic idea

that I must admit I have always been attracted to myself. At the cost of some dark squares on the queenside, White prevents Black's counterplay and can focus on the centre and kingside. Instead 18 ♗d5 ♗xd5 19 exd5 a4 gives Black enough play.

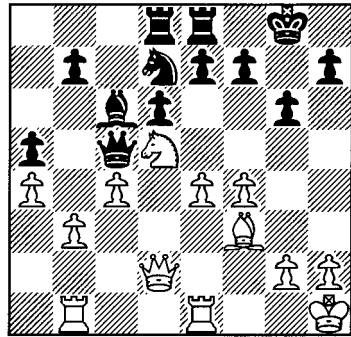
18...♖fe8

Again 18...♗b4 should be considered, both to stop ♗c3-d5 and to prepare ...♗c5.

19 ♖fe1 ♖ad8

This rook does not appear to do anything here, but this move is hardly bad if followed up correctly.

20 ♗d5



20...e6

Black's play has been tentative, but even here he could secure a decent game with the consistent 20...e5!?, playing on the dark squares. If 21 f5 ♗xd5 22 exd5 (or 22 cxd5 ♗b4 with the idea of ...♗c5), then 22...♖g7.

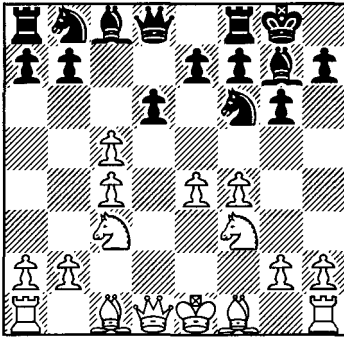
21 ♗c3 ♗f6 22 ♖bd1 h5?

A senseless weakening. It was not too late to play 22...e5.

23 ♖e3 e5 24 f5 ♖g7 25 ♖d3

By now White was able to combine play against Black's d6-pawn and weakened kingside in Y.Pelletier-N.Gurieli, Biel 2000.

B) 7 dxc5



This move also heads towards a Maroczy structure, but more pieces remain on the board than in Line A. As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, Black can avoid this line with 5...c5, but I do not think it is necessary to do so.

7...♖a5 8 ♔d3

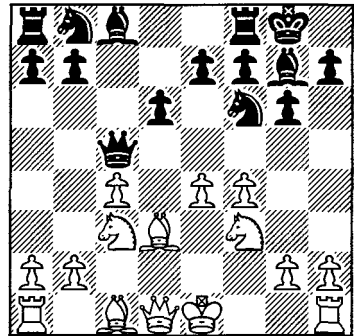
White should avoid 8 cxd6? ♗xe4 9 dxe7 ♜e8 10 ♔d2 ♗xc3. Instead 8 ♔d2 ♗xc5 9 b4 is sometimes played by players looking for a day off. Now 9...♗xb4 10 ♗a4 ♖a3 11 ♔c1 ♗b4+ 12 ♔d2 is a draw, but Black is justified in playing for more with 9...♗b6! when White already looks a bit overextended:

a) 10 e5?! is really pushing it: 10...dxe5 11 fxe5 ♗g4 12 ♗e2 ♗e6! (after 12...♗c6 13 ♗d5 ♗d8 14 0-0-0! is not so clear) 13 ♗d5 ♗xe5 14 0-0-0 (White will be crushed after 14 ♗c7? ♗d3+ 15 ♗d1 ♗d7 16 ♗xd3 ♗xc7, while

Ehlvest suggested White try 14 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 15 0-0-0 ♗c6 16 ♜e1, but Black is winning after 16...♗d6: for example, 17 b5 ♖a3+ 18 ♗d1 ♗d4 when 19 ♗xe5 ♖a4+ mates) 14...♗bc6 and Black was a pawn up in H.Hamdouchi-J.Ehlvest, Lucerne 1989.

b) 10 ♔d3 ♗c6 11 ♗a4 (after 11 a3 a5 12 b5 ♗g4! 13 ♗e2 ♗d4 14 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 Black is better and 15 ♗d5 ♗c5 16 ♗xe7+ loses material after 16...♗g7 17 ♜a2 ♗f2 18 ♜f1 ♔g4) 11...♗d8 (instead Bologan's 11...♗c7 12 ♜c1 ♔g4 13 h3 ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 e5 could be met with 15 f5!) 12 0-0 a5 gives Black good counterplay: for example, 13 bxa5 (if 13 b5 ♗b4) 13...♗xa5 14 ♜b1 ♗c6!? 15 ♗b3 ♔g4 16 ♗b6 ♜a7 17 ♔e3 ♗xf3 18 gxf3 (18 ♜xf3 ♗g4) 18...♗h5 with good play in G.Castellet Giralt-Z.Lanka, Olot 1993.

8...♗xc5



9 ♗e2

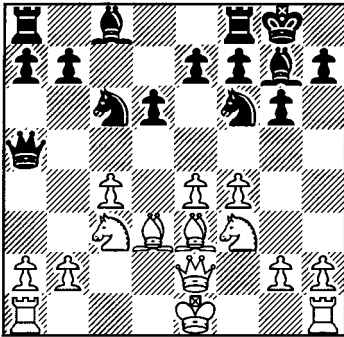
White prepares to play ♔e3 so that he can get castled.

9...♗c6

Instead 9...♔g4 could be played first. Then 10 ♔e3 ♖a5 11 0-0 (or 11 ♜c1

♭c6) 11...♭c6 transposes to the main line.

10 ♖e3 ♗a5



The position strongly resembles the Austrian Attack in the Pirc (1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♭f6 3 ♭c3 g6 4 f4 ♖g7 5 ♭f3 c5 6 dxc5 ♗a5 7 ♖d3 ♗xc5 8 ♗e2 0-0 9 ♖e3 ♗a5), but here White's c-pawn is on c4 rather than c2. Thus White has greater control of d5, but he cannot control d4 with a pawn and the b3- and b4-squares are slightly weakened. The advance of the c-pawn has also cost a tempo, although here the b2-pawn is defended by White's queen.

11 0-0

This is the most-common move, but playing 11 ♖c1 instead would limit Black's options. Then 11...♖g4 12 0-0 ♭d7 would transpose back to the main line.

11...♖g4

Here Black could also consider 11...♭g4!? 12 ♖d2 ♗b6+ 13 ♖h1 ♗xb2 when both 14 ♖ab1 and 14 ♭b5!? lead to complications. I do not think Black should bother with any of this, however,

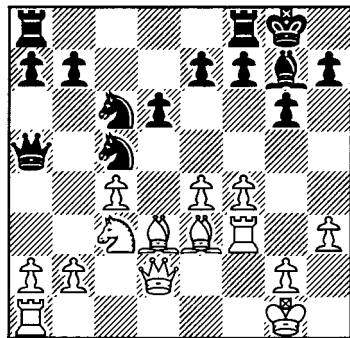
especially as White can avoid it all with 12 ♖c1.

12 ♖ac1

Instead 12 ♗f2 ♖xf3 13 gxf3 ♭d7 14 ♖ac1 again transposes back to the main line, while Black is doing well after 12 a3 ♭d7 13 b4 ♗d8 14 ♖ac1 a5 15 b5 ♭d4. Forcing the exchange on f3 with 12 h3 looks like a conceptual error, but Black should not take it too lightly. After 12...♖xf3 there is:

a) 13 gxf3 is certainly wrong, as 13...♭d7 (13...♭h5!? is possible too) leaves Black a tempo up, plus the pawn is worse on h3 than it is on h2.

b) 13 ♖xf3 ♭d7 14 ♗d2 ♭c5 is comfortable for Black, as White is not so well coordinated.

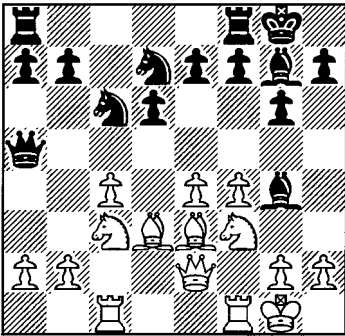


Then 15 ♖c1 ♖xc3!? 16 ♗xc3 ♭xd3 17 ♗xd3 ♗xa2 left White with some compensation for the pawn in B.Malich-G.Tringov, Siegen Olympiad 1970, although Black later won.

c) 13 ♗xf3 ♭d7 14 ♖ac1 ♭c5 (Black has also had some success with the pawn grab 14...♖xc3!? 15 ♖xc3 ♗xa2; this idea is also considered in the notes

to White's 14th move, below) 15 ♖b1 ♟a4 (this thematic move is not strictly necessary as White cannot attack very easily on the kingside, so Black should consider the typical Maroczy moves 15...♖ac8 and 15...a6) 16 ♟xa4 ♞xa4 17 b3 ♞a5 (17...♞a3!? intends ...a5-a4 and 18 c5?! is well met by 18...♟d4, but 18 ♞f2 a5?! 19 c5 gives White an advantage), and now 18 h4 ♟d4 19 ♖cd1 ♞c5 20 ♟f2 a5 gave Black counterplay in A.Summerscale-R.Palliser, Port Erin 1998. Instead 18 ♖cd1! covered the d4-square and left White with a slight edge in E.Vorobiov-E.Gorovykh, Dagomys 2010.

12...♟d7



13 ♞f2

White breaks the pin, keeps the queen's access to the kingside open and also controls the g1-a7 diagonal. Instead 13 h3 ♟xf3 14 ♞xf3 transposes to variation 'c' in the previous note, but there are a few other tries, of which 'c' is the most important.

a) 13 ♞h1 ♟c5 14 ♟b1 ♖fc8 (or 14...♟a4) 15 h3 ♟xf3 16 gxf3 ♟a4 17

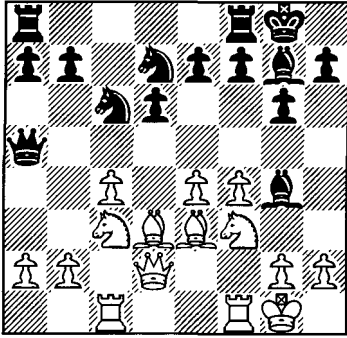
♟xa4 ♞xa4 18 h4 ♞b4 19 ♖f2 ♟d4 20 ♖g2 ♞c5 when White had been too generous with tempi and Black was already better in S.Giardelli-M.Crosa Coll, Ostende 2002.

b) 13 ♟b1 ♟c5 14 ♖fd1 (14 ♞f2 ♟xf3 15 gxf3 transposes to the main line) 14...♟a4 (Black could also try 14...a6, 14...♖ac8 or 14...♟e6) 15 ♟xa4 ♞xa4 and here:

b1) With 16 ♖d3 White hopes to pester the black queen: 16...♞a5 (a solid alternative is 16...b6 17 ♞f2 ♟xf3 18 gxf3 ♖ac8 19 ♖a3 ♞b4 20 ♖b3 ♞a5 21 ♖b5 ♞a6 22 ♖d1 ♞b7 23 b3 ♞c7 24 ♞h1 e6 with chances for both sides in A.Aguilo Benezam-C.Moreno Carretero, correspondence 2005) 17 ♞f2 ♟xf3 18 gxf3 ♖ac8 19 ♖b3 ♞c7 (or 19...b6) 20 ♟xa7 b5?! 21 ♟e3 bxc4 22 ♖xc4 and Black had nothing to show for the pawn in H.Gretarsson-T.Hillarp Persson, Copenhagen 1997. Instead Black could have played 20...♟xa7 21 ♞xa7 ♖b8 with compensation for the pawn, or even 20...e5!? with unclear play.

b2) 16 ♖d2 was later tried by Gretarsson against the same opponent. Here White is content with overprotecting the b2-pawn. After 16...♖ac8 17 h3 ♟xf3 18 ♞xf3 ♞b4 19 ♞f2 White had a small advantage in H.Gretarsson-T.Hillarp Persson, Reykjavik 1997, although Black may improve with 18...b6 or even 18...b5!?

c) 13 ♖d2 is a specialty of Garcia Palermo. It is not considered to be dangerous, but matters are not so simple:



c1) 13... exf3 is the most common, but after 14 exf3 dc5 15 eb1 wb4 (White was also a little bit better following 15... da4 16 dxa4 wxa4 17 xf2 in C.Garcia Palermo-E.Solana Suarez, Ponferrada 1991) 16 xf2 ? (not considered by Bologan, even though it was played several times in the 1990's; instead 16 b3 a5 17 d5 wxd2 18 exd2 e6 19 dc7 d4 20 dxa8 dxf3 + 21 gxf3 xa8 was A.Jones-R.Raimbert, correspondence 1987, and here 22 ee3 would preserve an edge, so Bologan points out 21... ed4 + 22 of1 xa8 with an equal endgame) Black has some problems:

c11) 16... wxc4 ?! 17 d5 wa4 was played in F.Braga-B.Belotti, Reggio Emilia 1991. Now 18 b4! d7 19 ec2 wa3 (if 19... wxa2 20 b5) 20 b5 ae8 ?! 21 ed1 ! and White has more than enough for the pawn.

c12) 16... da4 ?! 17 a3 wb3 18 e5! threatens ec2 .

c13) 16...a5?! 17 d5 (or 17 e5!?) with the idea of 17... dxe5 18 a3) 17... wxd2 18 fxd2 with an edge in C.Garcia Palermo-G.Hernandez, Bucaramanga 1992.

c14) 16... ac8 17 d5 wxd2 18 fxd2 and again the endgame favoured White in C.Garcia Palermo-G.Llanos, Trelew 1995.

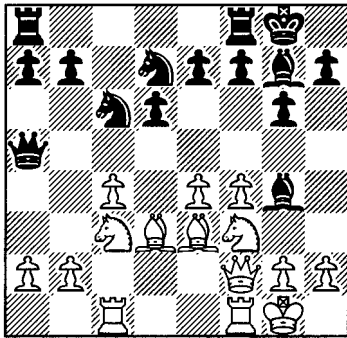
c2) 13... d5 looks more accurate. After 14 eb1 , 14... exf3 15 xf3 transposes to variation 'c1', but Black can look into the alternatives:

c21) 14... da4 15 dxa4 wxa4 16 h3 exf3 17 xf3 wb4 18 wxb4 dxb4 19 xf2 dc6 20 c5 dxc5 21 exc5 gives White an edge because of the bishop-pair. Now 21... ed4 ?! 22 exd4 dxd4 was played in C.Garcia Palermo-A.Sorin, Alicante 1992, and here the simple 23 c7 would give White a clear advantage.

c22) 14... ac8 15 h3 exf3 16 xf3 a6 17 xf2 da4 18 dxa4 wxa4 19 b3 was J.Rotstein-W.Uhlmann, Dresden 2006. Endgames should favour White, but Black could try 19... wa3 with the idea of 20 c5 xfd8 .

c23) 14... wb4 may be best. After 15 xf2 (after 15 b3 a5 Black has counter-play) 15... exf3 16 gxf3 wxc4 ?! (this is a sharp try, but Black could also play the typical 16... da4 !?) 17 d5 wa4 18 b3 (White can win back the pawn and grab another with 18 dxe7 + dxe7 19 wxd6 de6 20 wxe7 , but Black has good compensation after 20... ed4) 18... wa3 19 b4 da4 20 b5 e6! 21 bxc6 exd5 22 cxb7 fab8 Black had taken over the initiative and White quickly fell apart after 23 xc7 ?! dc3 24 ec2 ? db5 and 0-1 in C.Garcia Palermo-D.Flores, Buenos Aires 2001. Black attacks the rook and threatens ...d4.

Returning to 13 ♖f2:



13...xf3

Instead 13...c5 14 b1 a4 (14...xf3 15 gxf3 is back to the main line) 15 xa4 xa4 is also possible, but White may try to exploit Black's omission of ...xf3. A couple of possibilities:

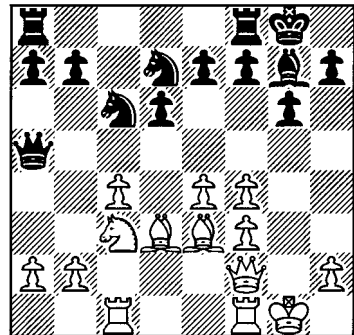
a) 16 b3 a5 17 ffd1 (after 17 c5 xf3, 18 xf3 d4 is fine for Black and 18 gxf3 dxc5 19 xc5 a6 is unclear – White has the bishop-pair, but Black has the better pawn structure) 17...xf3 18 xf3 b2!? 19 c2 a3 20 cd2 c5 was fine for Black in J.Simon-A.Volokitin, Southampton 2003.

b) 16 d4!? gives the game an independent course: 16...xd4 17 xd4 xd4 18 xd4 (with the idea of 19 f5) 18...d7 looks totally level, but after 19 c3, which has ideas like f5 and h3, Black should still take some care, especially with his queen so far away.

14 gxf3

This is almost universally played, but 14 xf3!? is also possible. The position is actually the same as that which arises after 12 h3 except the pawn is not actu-

ally on h3 here. Black can play the typical 14...c5 15 b1 and then 15...a4, 15...ac8 or 15...a6. It is also possible to grab a pawn: 14...xc3!? 15 xc3 xa2 16 f2 a5 17 g4 was V.Usachy-E.Kostetsky, correspondence 1985, and after 17...c5 intending ...b4 White has some compensation but probably no more than that.



At first the position seems easy for Black. He has exchanged off a minor piece, has good control of the dark squares and has damaged White's pawn structure. White has a simple plan though: he will play f4-f5, h1, g1 and even h4-h5 to attack the black kingside. While Black's position is optically attractive, he still must play with purpose.

14...c5 15 b1 a4!

And this is the way. Black seeks further exchanges, and in doing so hopes to soften up White's queenside. Now White can acquiesce to the exchange of knights to avoid losing time or he can play a somewhat unnatural retreat to keep pieces on the board.

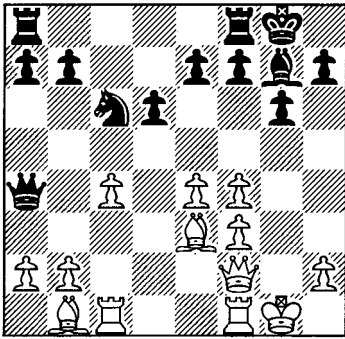
B1: 16 ♖xa4

B2: 16 ♖d1

B1) 16 ♖xa4

This was Flear's recommendation, although Bologan considers it less critical than 16 ♖d1. It is hard to say which is stronger, but after the exchange of knights the play is easier to understand – for both sides.

16... ♖xa4



17 ♖fd1

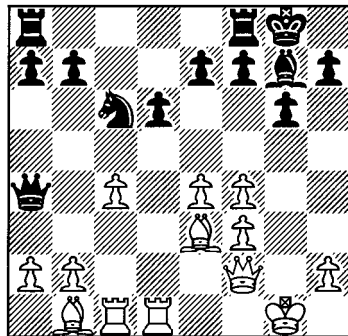
This is White's most common move. It seems as though the rook is headed in the wrong direction, but the centre is the centre and the rook may still join in a kingside attack either by switching back to g1 or by heading to d5 and then g5. There are several alternatives:

a) 17 ♖h1 ♖b4! (this is a typical idea; by provoking the advance of White's b-pawn, Black creates a target for counterplay) 18 b3 a5 19 c5 a4 was agreed drawn here in G.Vallin-M.Acher, French League 2007.

b) 17 h4 is very direct: 17... ♖b4 18 b3

a5 (thematic, but 18... ♖h6 is also possible; after 19 ♖h1 e5 20 f5 ♖xe3 21 ♖xe3 ♖b6 22 ♖h6 ♖d8! Black was able to defend his king and enjoyed good dark-square control in G.Soppe-O.Panno, Buenos Aires 1999) 19 c5 ♖d4!? (19...dxc5 20 ♖xc5 ♖b5 is also okay) 20 ♖c4 (the endgame is level after 20 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 21 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 22 ♖f2 dxc5 23 ♖xc5 ♖fc8 24 ♖fc1 ♖xc5 25 ♖xc5 ♖e6) 20... ♖xe3 21 ♖xe3 ♖a3 22 h5 dxc5 23 ♖xc5 ♖ad8 gave Black a good position in C. Gabriel-R.Har Zvi, Altensteig 1994. It is not so easy for White to play for a kingside attack when the centre opens up.

c) 17 b3 ♖a3 (17... ♖a5!?) 18 c5 (instead 18 ♖c2 a5 19 e5 a4 20 ♖c1 ♖c5 21 ♖e3 ♖a3 22 ♖c1 was drawn in S.Barrett-L.Wu, Great Yarmouth 2007, but Black could have played on with 22... ♖c5 23 ♖e3 ♖a5!?) 18...dxc5 19 ♖xc5 ♖xc5! 20 ♖xc5 ♖d4 21 ♖d1 ♖xf2+ 22 ♖xf2 ♖fd8 23 ♖cd5 e6 24 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 25 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 26 ♖e3 ♖f8 with a level ending in the well-known game V.Topalov-G.Kasparov, Linares 1994.



17...b6

This is a solid move. Black prevents any c4-c5 advance. Others:

a) 17...♖b4 and now:

a1) 18 b3 ♜fd8 (also possible is 18...a5 19 c5 ♜fd8 20 cxd6 ♜xd6 21 ♜xd6 ♖xd6 22 e5 ♖e6) 19 ♜d5 ♖a3 20 ♜cd1 ♙b2? (20...b6) 21 e5! and Black was in trouble in G.Flear-S.Rouhouse, French League 2004.

a2) 18 ♜c2 avoids Black's plan to advance the a-pawn. Now 18...b6 19 ♜d3 ♜ac8 20 a3 ♖a4 21 b3 ♖a6 22 b4 was H.Gretarsson-J.Balcerak, Pardubice 1998, when Black should play 22...♖b7 23 ♙a2 ♜fd8 with a solid position.

b) 17...♜ac8 18 b3 ♖a5 19 ♜d5 ♖c7 and then:

b1) 20 ♖d2 b6 21 b4 a5! takes advantage of the lack of pressure on the b6-pawn: 22 b5 ♗b8 was J.Novak-K.Lagerborg, correspondence 2000, when Black will prepare ...♗d7-c5.

b2) 20 ♜cd1 b6 21 a3 (this looks odd, as White could play 21 h4 ♗b4 22 ♜g5) 21...♜fd8 22 h4 e6 23 ♜g5 was V.Topalov-S.Dolmatov, Elenite 1995. Here Bologan suggests 23...♗e7 with the idea of...d5.

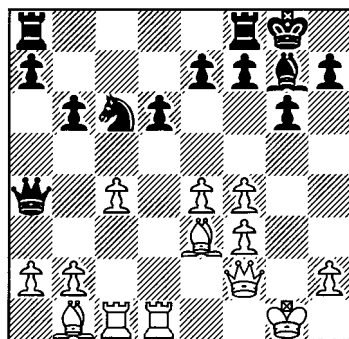
c) 17...♜fd8 and now:

c1) 18 h4 ♖b4 19 b3 (19 ♜c2 could be tried as well) 19...a5 20 c5 a4 with typical counterplay in G.Milos-H.Peng, Groningen 1996.

c2) 18 ♙h1 e5!? (or 18...♖b4) 19 f5 ♗d4 20 f4 ♖c6 21 fxg6 fxg6 22 ♖g2 ♙f6 (or 22...♙h6!?) 23 f5 ♙h8 24 fxg6 ♜g8 with unclear play.

c3) 18 ♜d3 prevents Black's queen

from bothering White's queenside: 18...♖a5 (not 18...♖b4? 19 ♜b3) 19 a3 ♖c7 20 ♙h1 was H.Gretarsson-H.Olsen, Gentofte 1999, and here Black should play 20...e5 21 fxe5 (or 21 f5 ♗d4) 21...dxe5 22 ♜d5 ♗d4 with enough counterplay on the dark squares; ...♗e6-f4 is one possibility.



18 ♙h1

White can also try to do without this move with 18 ♜d5!? ♖a6 19 a3 ♜ac8 20 ♙d3 ♖b7 21 b4 ♜fd8 22 ♙f1 e6 23 ♜d2 ♗e7 24 ♜cd1 ♖b8?! (24...♖c7 would save a tempo over the game, while 24...d5!? is possible as well) 25 ♖h4 ♖c7 26 f5! exf5 27 ♙f4 ♙e5 28 ♙g5 ♜e8 29 f4 and White crashed through in J.Rizzitano-M.Nilsson, Mashantucket 2004.

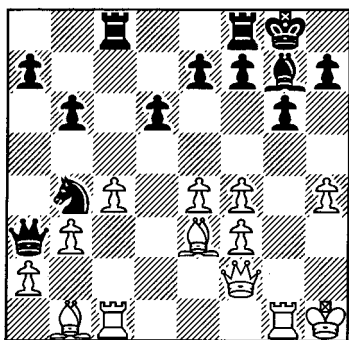
18...♜ac8 19 h4

After 19 b3 ♖a3 20 h4 Black could transpose to the main line with 20...♗b4 or play for the dark squares with 20...♙h6!? 21 ♜g1 e5 22 f5 ♙xe3 23 ♖xe3 ♙g7 with the idea of ...♖c5, although this does look a bit risky.

19...♗b4!

This is a good way to create counterplay and Black should not hesitate. Instead 19...♖c7 20 h5 ♘b4 21 hxg6 fxg6 (after 21...hxg6 22 b3 ♖a5 23 f5 the black queen is cut off) 22 b3 ♖a5 (22...♖a3 is still possible, but Black has lost time and her pawn structure has been compromised) 23 ♖g1 ♗h8 24 ♖g5 gave White good attacking chances in I.Sokolov-Xie Jun, Breda 1999.

20 b3 ♖a3 21 ♖g1



This was Flear's recommendation, though he stops here. In fact this had already been seen in practice.

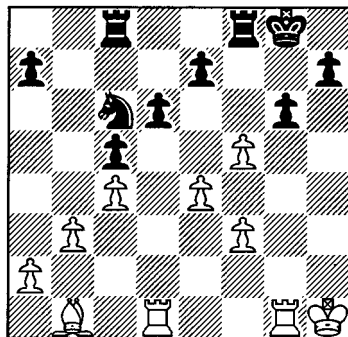
21...♖b2! 22 ♖xb2

White can hardly avoid the exchange of queens. After 22 ♖g3?! ♘xa2 23 ♗xa2 (23 ♖g2? ♖xb3! hits the loose e3-bishop) 23...♖xa2 Black's queenside play is faster than anything White has on the kingside.

22...♗xb2 23 ♖cd1 ♘c6 24 h5

Instead 24 ♖g2 ♗a3 25 h5 ♗c5 (I would prefer 25...♗g7 26 f5 ♖g8 with the idea of ...♗c5) 26 ♗c1 ♗h8 led to a draw in J.Mercadal Benejam-M.Lecroq, correspondence 2000.

24...♗a3 25 f5 ♗c5 26 ♗xc5 bxc5 27 hxg6 fxg6



28 f4

After 28 fxg6 h6!? (or even 28...♖xf3!? 29 gxh7+ ♗h8) 29 ♖g3 ♗g7 30 ♗g2 ♘e5 with the idea of ...♖f6 and ...♖cf8 Black has no problems.

28...♗h8 29 ♖g5

Instead 29 fxg6 ♖xf4 is good for Black.

29...gxf5 30 exf5 ♘d4 31 ♗g2

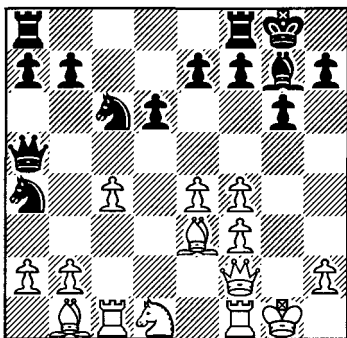
If 31 b4 ♖f6! 32 b5 d5! Black has a slight initiative.

31...a5

Black's strong d4-knight gave him at least equal chances in Y.Zimmerman-I.Morev, Lipetsk 2007.

B2) 16 ♘d1

This move looks odd, but it should not be underestimated. The knight does not have much of a future from d1, but White may kick away Black's a4-knight with b2-b3 or even chase the queen away with a3 and b4. Black has many different options here, but it is not clear what the best method is.



16...e6!?

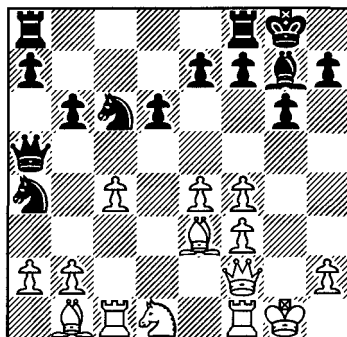
This is a good, flexible move that also comes up in the analogous lines of the Pirc. White is not really in a position to put pressure on the d6-pawn, so Black controls some central squares and introduces the possibility of playing ...f5, which is a typical idea in the analogous lines of the Pirc. There are many alternatives:

a) 16...f5 looks a little premature: 17 exf5! (instead 17 ♖h1 was M.Serov-S.Solovjov, Saint Petersburg 2006, and now 17...e6 transposes back to our main line) 17...gxf5 18 ♖h1 ♖h8 19 ♖g1 e6. Solovjov claimed that Black was better here, but after 20 a3! White is ready to not only push back the black queen, but he may also activate his light-squared bishop on the a2-g8 diagonal. After 20...♖g8 21 b4 ♜c7 rather than 22 ♙a2 a5! 23 b5 ♘d8 with unclear play in P.Daus-F.Rubio Doblaz, correspondence 2005, White could play 22 ♙c2 ♘b6 23 ♙b3 with some advantage, as 23...a5 is not possible because the b6-knight is hanging.

b) 16...♘c5 17 ♖h1 (17 ♘c3 ♘a4 invites a repetition) 17...♖ac8 18 ♖g1 ♖fe8 19 h4 and here rather than 19...♜c7 20 ♜d2 ♘e6 21 ♘c3 ♘ed4 22 ♜f2 ♜d7 23 ♖g3 ♙f6 24 ♜h2 e6 25 h5 with some pressure in C.Gabriel-D.Hausrath, German League 1997, Black could have played 19...b6!? 20 h5 ♘b4 (a typical lunge) with counterplay.

c) 16...b5!? 17 b3 ♘c5 (17...♘b6!?) 18 cxb5 ♜xb5 19 ♘c3 ♜b7?! (this leads to trouble; better is 19...♜a5 20 e5 ♘e6) 20 e5! ♖ad8 21 ♙xc5 dxc5 22 ♙e4 ♜d7 23 ♖fd1 ♘d4 24 ♘d5 was S.Kapnisis-V.Kotronias, Kalamata 2005. Here Black's best is probably 24...♙h6!?, although White has the upper hand after 25 ♖xd4! (not 25 ♖xc5 ♘e6 26 ♘f6+ exf6 27 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 with counterplay) 25...cxd4 26 ♜h4 ♙g7 27 ♖c7 ♜xc7 28 ♘xc7 d3 29 ♜xe7 d2 30 ♙c2 d1♜+ 31 ♙xd1 ♖xd1+ 32 ♖g2.

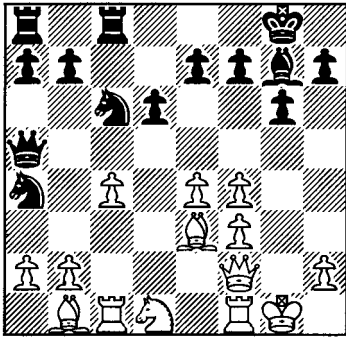
d) 16...b6 has only been played once, but it is a solid move and was endorsed by Bologan.



Here 17 a3 (Bologan suggests White should play 17 f5 ♖ac8 18 ♙d2 ♜c5 19

♙e3 ♖a5 with a repetition) 17...♗h5 18 b4 a5 19 b5 was seen in S.Kapnisis-T.Gelashvili, Kavala 2007. Now Bologan gives 19...♗b8 20 ♖h1 (20 ♙xb6 ♗xb6 21 ♖xb6 ♙h6 22 ♗e3 ♗h4 wins back the pawn with a good position) 20...♗d7 21 f5 ♗ac5 22 ♗c3 e6 23 ♗e2 ♙h6 24 ♗f4 ♙xf4 25 ♙xf4 ♗e5 26 ♖fd1 ♖ad8 with an unclear position where Black's chances are not worse.

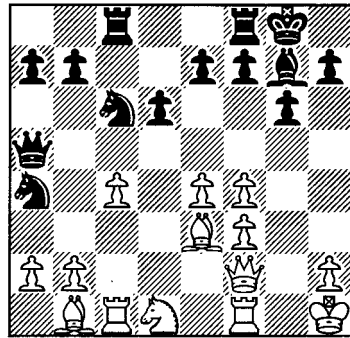
e) 16...♖fc8 is Flear's main line, which he considers unclear.



With 17 a3 (after 17 b3 ♗c5 18 ♖h1 ♗b4 with the idea of ...a5 Black has counterplay, but 17 ♖h1!? is a possibility) 17...♗h5 (or 17...e6 18 b4 ♗d8 19 ♖h1 a5 20 b5 ♗b8 21 f5 ♗d7 with unclear play in S.Swapnil-P.Shetty, Nagpur 2008, where Black went on to score a big upset) 18 b4 a5 (18...e5!?) 19 b5 ♗b8 20 ♖h1 ♗d7 21 ♙d3 ♗dc5 22 ♙e2 the bishop has made a strange journey, but hopes to bother the black queen. Black has several options here: 22...♗e6?! has been played, but this really seems to encourage White's play. Instead 22...e6 is possible, while Flear's suggested

22...♗b2!? 23 ♖c2 ♗bd3 24 ♗g3 f5 25 ♗c3 e6 looks fine as well.

f) 16...♖ac8 is the most popular move. Black keeps a rook on f8 to support a possible ...f5. After 17 ♖h1 (instead 17 a3 has scored horribly for White; after 17...♗h5 18 b4 e5 Black has ideas like ...♗d4, ...♙h6 ...exf4, while 18...a5 is another good option) and now 17...♗c5 transposes to 'variation b', while Black also has:

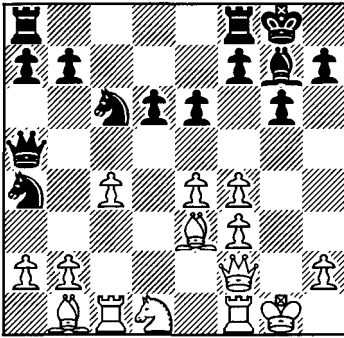


f1) 17...♗h5 18 b3 ♗c5 19 ♖g1 ♗e6 (19...e5!?) 20 f5 ♗ed4 21 ♖g3 ♙h6 22 ♗c3 ♙xe3 23 ♖xe3 with the idea of f4 and ♖h3 is dangerous for Black, as shown in several games of the German correspondence player Daus.

f2) 17...♗d8 18 ♖g1 e6 19 b3 ♗c5 20 ♗c3 b6 21 f5 ♗e5 22 ♗e2 ♖e8 23 ♖g3 ♗c6 24 ♗d2 was C.Gabriel-J.Gallagher, Swiss League 2006, and here 24...♗e7 would have kept the position unclear.

f3) 17...b5!? 18 b3 ♗b6 19 cxb5 ♖xb5 20 ♗c3 ♖a6 21 ♖g1 ♗b4 with counterplay in T.Neuer-V.Dudiyev, correspondence 2008.

Returning to the flexible 16...e6:



17 ♖h1 f5

Black can also delay this advance with 17...♞ad8 and then:

a) 18 a3 ♜h5 19 b4 d5!? 20 c5?! d4 21 ♙d2 d3 22 e5 was Y.Zimmerman-A.Toth, Budapest 1998, when 22...♞d4 looks best with complicated play.

b) 18 b3 ♘c5 (or even 18...♘c3 19 ♘xc3 ♙xc3 20 f5 ♙g7) 19 ♞g1 b6 (19...f5 20 h4!) 20 f5 ♘b4! 21 ♜h4 exf5 (21...♞xa2 22 f6 looks too risky, but may be playable) 22 exf5 ♘cd3 23 f6 ♜f5! 24 fxg7 ♜xf3+ 25 ♞g2 ♞fe8 26 ♙xd3 ♘xd3 27 ♞a1 d5! 28 ♖g1 dxc4 29 ♞g3 ♜e2 30 ♘f2 ♘xf2 31 ♙xf2 cxb3 32 axb3 ♞d2 33 ♜f6 ♞e6 34 ♜f3 ♖xg7 35 ♜xe2 ♞exe2 led to a draw in A.5chramm-M.Zeihser, correspondence 2004.

18 exf5 exf5

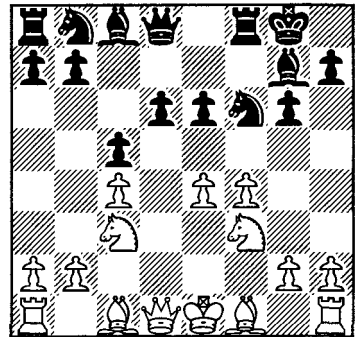
The position is murky. Both sides have issues with their pawn structures, while White has the bishop-pair, but his pieces are awkward. After 19 a3 ♞fe8 20 b4 ♜d8 21 ♙a2 ♜f6 22 ♙b3 ♘b2 23 ♞c2 ♘d1 24 ♞xd1 ♖h8 Black went on to win a complicated game in J.Loxine-J.Degraeve, German League 2008.

C) 8 dxe6

This move is not very natural, but it is not harmless and is a big favourite of the creative Ukrainian Grandmaster Viktor Moskalenko.

8...fxe6

Instead 8...♙e6 is played sometimes, but after 9 ♙d3 White scores very well. Both 9...♙g4 10 0-0 ♘c6 11 h3 ♙xf3 12 ♜xf3 ♘d4 13 ♜f2 and 9...♘c6 10 f5 ♙d7 11 0-0 ♘g4 12 ♘d5 leave White with good prospects of a kingside initiative.



By exchanging off his d-pawn, White has both given up both space and central control. In return he hopes to create play by advancing his e- or f-pawn. There may be some possibilities of putting pressure on Black's d6 pawn as well.

9 ♙d3

White develops the bishop to an active square where it supports an f4-f5 advance. A breakthrough with e4-e5 is also possible when White's bishop will take aim at the black kingside. Others:

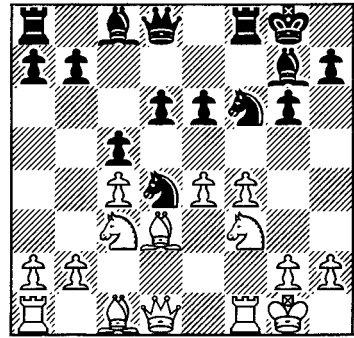
a) White is not well enough devel-

oped to profit from opening the position with 9 e5: 9...dxe5 10 ♖xd8 ♜xd8 11 ♗xe5 (or 11 fxe5 ♗g4) 11...♗fd7 12 ♗f3 (instead 12 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 is level, but Black can also play 12...♗xc3!?) 13 bxc3 ♜xd7 14 ♗e3 b6 15 ♜d1 ♜xd1+ 16 ♗xd1 ♗c6 17 ♗d3 ♗a6 with good play against the doubled pawns, V.Karasev-R.Nicevski, Polanica Zdroj 1974) 12...♗c6 13 ♗e3 e5 14 0-0-0 ♗d4 15 fxe5 ♗xe5 16 ♗xd4 cxd4 17 ♗xd4 ♗g4 18 ♗e2 ♗xe2 19 ♗xe2 ♗xc4 20 ♗xg7 1/2-1/2 J.Rasin-D.Vigorito, New Hampshire 1991.

b) With 9 ♗e2 White hopes to create pressure against the d6-pawn, but this move is too modest to allow him to fight for the initiative: 9...♗c6 10 0-0 b6 11 ♗h1 (after 11 ♖d3 ♗b7 12 f5 ♗b4 13 ♖b1 ♖e8! 14 a3 ♗c6 15 ♗d3 ♗g4 Black had good play in T. Carnstam-T.Franzen, correspondence 2005) 11...♗b7 12 ♗e3 ♖e7 13 ♖d2 ♜ad8 14 ♜ae1 ♗h8 (14...♗g4!?) looks like a better try; after 15 ♗g1, 15...♗xc3!?) is one possibility: 16 bxc3 ♗a5 with unclear play) 15 f5 exf5 16 exf5 gxf5 17 ♗g5 ♖d7 18 ♗d3 was J.Piket-J.Nunn, Wijk aan Zee 1992, and here Black should try 18...♗b4!?

9...♗c6 10 0-0 ♗d4

Black could also maintain the tension with 10...a6, intending ...b6 and ...♗b7 or ...♗d7. Black also stops any ♗c3-b5 ideas and prepares a possible ...b5. The text move is more direct, however. Now White can go fishing in tactical waters or he can play a strategic game. We have:



C1: 11 ♗g5

C2: 11 ♗xd4

Several other moves have been tried as well. They are less critical but deserve attention, at the very least to understand some of the typical ideas for both sides.

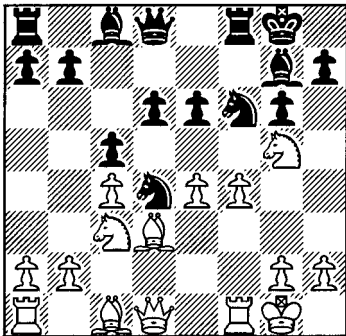
a) 11 ♗d2 ♗d7 12 ♖e1 ♗h5! 13 ♗xd4 cxd4 (13...♗xd4+ is fine too) 14 ♗e2 e5 15 b4 (instead 15 f5 ♗c6 16 g4?! ♗f6 17 g5 ♗xe4 18 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 19 f6 ♗xf6! 20 gxf6 ♜xf6 21 ♜xf6 ♖xf6 is great for Black: for example, 22 ♗xd4 d5 23 cxd5 ♗xd5 with a winning attack) 15...exf4 16 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 17 ♗xf4 ♗e5 18 ♖g3 ♖e7 and Black had no problems at all in G.Estevez Morales-P.Ostojic, Kecs-kemet 1977.

b) 11 ♖e1 ♗h5! 12 ♗xd4 cxd4 13 ♗e2 e5 (also possible is 13...♗d7 14 g4 ♗f6 15 g5 ♗g4 16 ♖g3 ♗e3 17 ♗xe3 dxe3 with unclear play in E.Spyrou-R.Mecklenburg, Germany 1997) 14 f5 ♗f6 15 fxc6 hxc6 16 ♗g5 was M.Fuller-G.Canfell, Melbourne 1992. Here

16...♖b6 looks best, with even chances.

c) 11 ♖h1 ♗d7 (Black has also tried 11...b6 and 11...♗h5, while 11...e5!? is possible as well) 12 ♗g5 (12 ♗d2 ♗c6 13 ♗g5, as in A.Yuneev-A.Fedorov, St Petersburg 1994, is best met with 13...♖e7) 12...♖e7 13 e5 (it looks suspicious to begin such an operation when lagging in development) 13...dxe5 14 fxe5 ♗h5 15 ♖xf8+ (after the 15 g4 of J.Petronic-V.Petrovic, Tivat 1995, 15...h6! looks the most accurate) 15...♖xf8 16 ♗xh7 (this is a common idea for White, but it just does not work here) 16...♖h4! 17 ♗xf8? (preferable was 17 ♗g5, but Black is still better after 17...♗g3+ 18 ♖g1 ♖xh7 19 hxg3 ♗xe5) 17...♗xe5 18 h3 ♖g3 and it was Black who had a crushing attack in N.Adams-M.Galyas, Budapest 2008.

C1) 11 ♗g5



This move is rather adventurous. White hopes to provoke a weakness on the kingside. However, White's play neglects the centre and Black has worked out a couple of good responses.

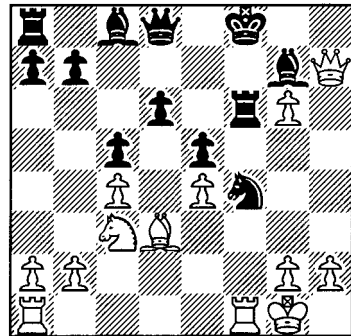
11...e5! 12 f5 h6! 13 ♗h3

Black should also be prepared for the speculative 13 fxc6 hxc6 14 ♗xg5 when there are a few options:

a) 14...♗g4 15 ♗xf6 ♖d7! 16 ♗xg7 ♗xd1 17 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 18 ♖axd1 ♖g4 19 ♗d5 ♖g7 20 h3 ♖xf1+ 21 ♖xf1 was V.Toporov-A.Chehlov, St Petersburg 1998. Here Bologan suggests 21...♖xg6 with unclear play.

b) 14...♗e6 15 ♗xf6 (or 15 ♗d5 ♗xd5 16 exd5 ♖d7) 15...♗xf6 16 ♖h5 ♖e7 17 ♗d5 ♗xd5 18 exd5 ♖g7 19 ♖ae1 ♗e7 was M.Genovese-A.Venni, correspondence 1989. White has some compensation for the piece, but I prefer Black.

c) 14...♗e6 15 ♗xf6 ♖xf6! (after 15...♗xf6 16 ♖h5 ♖d7 17 ♖xf6!? ♖xf6 18 ♗d5 ♖f8 19 ♖h4 ♗f4 20 ♗e7+ ♖g7 21 ♖h7+ ♖f6 White has at least a draw) 16 ♖h5 ♗f4 17 ♖h7+ ♖f8 and now:

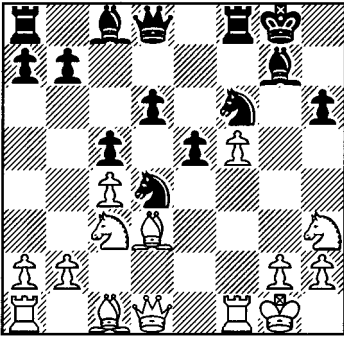


c1) 18 ♗d5 ♗e6 19 ♗xf6 ♖xf6 20 g3 ♖e7! 21 gxf4 ♖h8 was winning for Black in V.Toporov-A.Bratchenko, St Petersburg 2001.

c2) 18 g3 ♖e8! (Black can also take a draw with 18...♗h3+ 19 ♖h1 ♗f2+ 20

♔g1 ♖h3+) 19 gxf4 ♜xg6+ 20 ♜xg6 ♜xg6+ 21 ♔h1 ♙h3 22 ♜f2 exf4 23 e5!? (Black has more than enough for the pawn after 23 ♜xf4+ ♔e8) 23...♜g4 24 ♙f5 dxe5 with complicated play.

13...gxf5 14 exf5



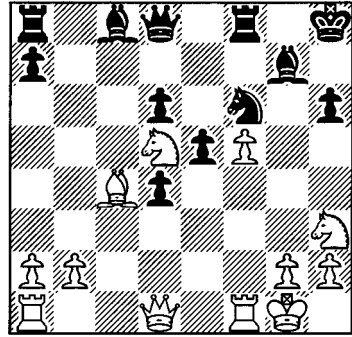
14...e4!?

This rare move was recommended by Bologan, but it was not mentioned by Moskalenko. Black gets good chances this way and I suspect this line is one reason that white players have turned their attention towards Line C2. Much more common is 14...b5!? which was made famous by the game Christiansen-Kasparov. White has:

a) 15 b3?! is too passive: 15...b4 (15...♙b7 is good too) 16 ♖e4 ♙xf5 17 ♖xf6+ ♜xf6 18 ♙xf5 ♖xf5 19 ♜d5+ ♔h7 20 ♙b2 ♜g6 21 ♜ae1 a5 22 ♖f2 ♖h4 23 ♜d1 e4 0-1 I.Glek-D.Barash, correspondence 1986.

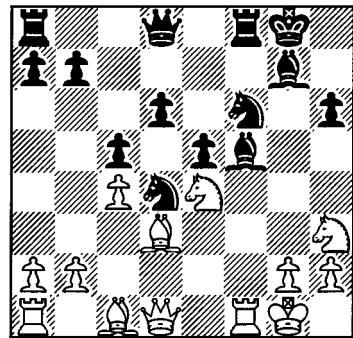
b) 15 ♖xb5!? is probably White's best try: 15...♖xb5 16 cxb5 d5 17 ♙e3 c4 18 ♙e2 ♙b7 gave Black compensation for the pawn in A.Collobiano-P.Geryk, correspondence 2008.

c) 15 ♙e3 bxc4 16 ♙xc4+ ♔h8 17 ♙xd4 cxd4 18 ♖d5 hopes for a bind.



However, after 18...♙a6! 19 ♖xf6!? (Black is in control after 19 ♙xa6 ♖xd5 20 ♜h5 ♖e3 21 ♜f3 d5) 19...♙xc4 20 ♖h5 ♙xf1 21 ♜g4 ♜d7 22 ♜xf1 d3 (both 22...♜f7 and 22...♜ac8 look good too) 23 ♜f3 (White had better chances to hold after 23 ♖f2 d2 24 ♖e4 ♜xf5 25 ♜xf5 d1♜+ 26 ♜xd1 ♜xf5 27 ♖xd6 ♜g6 28 ♖xg7 ♔xg7 29 h3 according to Kasparov) 23...d2 24 g4 ♜ac8 25 ♜d3 ♜a4 26 ♖f2 ♜d4! 27 ♜xd4 exd4 Black won the ending in L.Christiansen-G.Kasparov, Moscow Interzonal 1982.

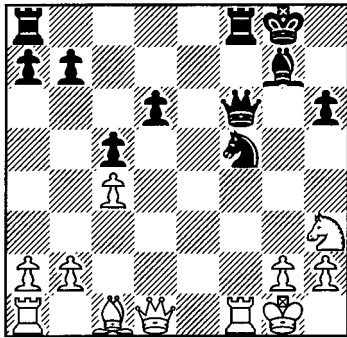
15 ♖xe4 ♙xf5



16 ♖xf6+

This leads nowhere, but Black has nothing to complain about after 16 ♖hf2 ♖xe4 17 ♖xe4 ♜d7 or 16 ♖g3 ♘xd3 17 ♜xd3 ♜d7.

16... ♜xf6 17 ♘xf5 ♖xf5



18 ♜d5+

Instead 18 g4 is well met by 18... ♜d4+, but 18 ♖f4 is probably a better try. Black has:

a) 18... ♜ae8 19 g3 (instead 19 ♜d5+ ♜f7 is a little better for Black according to Bologan, while 19 ♖d5 ♜d4+ 20 ♖h1 ♜xc4 gives Black a clear advantage) 19... ♜e5 and White still has trouble developing.

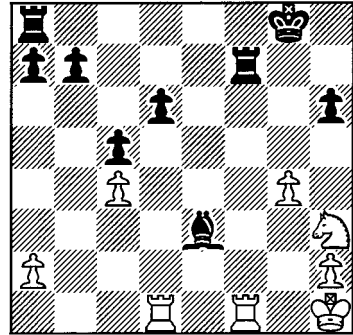
b) 18... ♜d4+ 19 ♖h1? (better is 19 ♜xd4 ♘xd4+ 20 ♖h1 ♜ae8, but Black is still the better developed) 19... ♜xd1 (both 19... ♜ae8 and 19... ♜xc4! look stronger) 20 ♜xd1 ♜ae8 21 ♜b1 ♜e4 22 b3 ♖e3 23 ♘xe3 ♜xe3 24 g3 ♘e5 led to a draw in W.Pajeken-E.Chevelevitch, Hamburg 2002.

18... ♜f7 19 ♘f4 ♜d4+ 20 ♜xd4 ♘xd4+ 21 ♖h1 ♘b2 22 ♜ad1 ♘d4

This preserves the better chances,

but both 22... ♜af8 and 22... ♜e8 are more incisive.

23 g4 ♖e3 24 ♘xe3 ♘xe3



The h3-knight is not looking too good.

25 ♜fe1

Black is also much better after 25 ♜xf7 ♖xf7 26 ♜xd6 ♜g8!

25... ♜e8

I would prefer 25... ♘d4.

26 ♖g2

A better choice would be 26 ♜xd6 ♜ee7, although Black is still better.

26... ♜e5

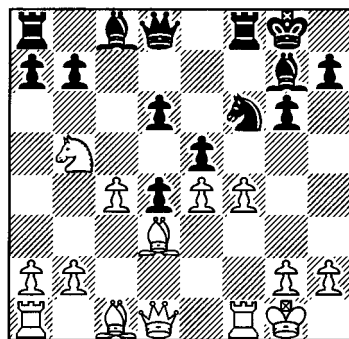
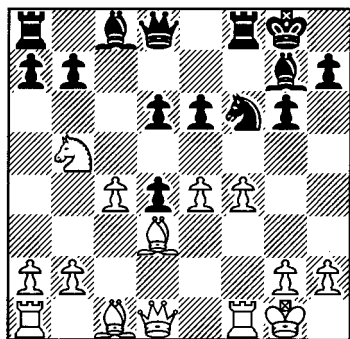
Instead 26... ♜e4 27 ♖g3 ♜d4 looks very strong. Black is still much better after the text, but a draw was agreed in T.Lampen-V.Zivkovic, Kallithea 2008.

C2) 11 ♖xd4

Both Flear and Moskalenko prefer this positional move.

11... cxd4 12 ♖b5

The knight exerts pressure on both of Black's d-pawns, but if White cannot maintain the initiative, the knight could end up out of play.

**12...e5**

This move is the most natural and is considered best by Moskalenko. Others:

a) 12...a6 13 ♘xd4! (instead 13 ♘xd6 ♖xd6 14 e5 ♖c7 15 exf6 ♗xf6 was fairly level in V.Moskalenko-G.Grigore, Solsones 2004) 13...♗b6 14 ♖e3 ♘g4 (or 14...♗xb2 15 ♗b1 ♖xa2 16 f5 with good attacking chances) 15 ♖xg4 ♖xd4 16 ♖f2 ♗xb2 17 ♗ad1 and White's development lead gave him a strong initiative in the game G.Flear-F.Guilleux, Dieppe 2009.

b) 12...♗e8!? is a worthy alternative: 13 ♖d2 a6 14 ♘a3 ♘f6 (Flear only gives 14...♗h4 15 ♖e1 ♖xe1 16 ♗axe1 with a comfortable ending for White in V.Moskalenko-I.Nataf, Salou 2004) 15 ♘c2 ♘d7 (or 15...♗b6 16 b4 e5 as given by Bologan; note that 17 f5?! gxf5 is good for Black after both 18 exf5? e4 and 18 c5 ♖c6 19 exf5 b5!) 16 b4 a5 17 ♖g4 ♖e7 18 ♗ae1?! (better is 18 a3, although Black is comfortable after 18...b6) 18...axb4 19 ♘xb4 ♘c5 with an excellent game for Black in E.Duliba-R.Moll, correspondence 2007.

13 ♖b3

White keeps the pawn tension and prepares to attack the d6-pawn. He has also tried 13 fxe5 dxe5 14 c5 ♖e6 and then:

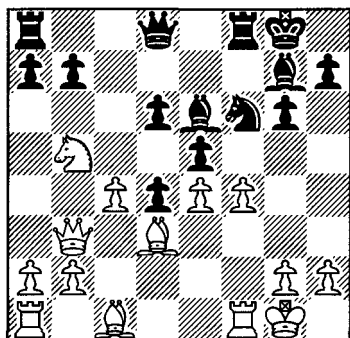
a) 15 ♖g5 ♖d7 16 b4? (16 ♘d6 16...♘xe4! exploited the loose knight in D.Reinderman-F.Nijboer, Haarlem 2009.
b) After 15 ♖c2 ♖e7 16 ♖g5 h6 17 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 18 ♖c4 (18 ♘d6 ♖g7 19 ♖c4 ♖g4 20 ♖e2 ♖e6 21 ♖c4 ♖g4 22 ♖e2 was drawn in J.Sarrau-B.Laurent, Namur 2009) 18...♖xc4 19 ♖xc4+ ♖g7 20 ♘d6 Flear considers White to be better, but, Moskalenko thinks it is unclear. White has a queenside pawn majority and his knight looks very nice, but Black may undermine it and he has a strong passed pawn himself. Now 20...♖g5 21 g3 ♖e3+ 22 ♖g2 d3 23 b4 d2 24 ♖e2 ♖d4 was V.Moskalenko-J.Campos Moreno, Ca'n Picafort 2005. Here Moskalenko suggests 25 ♗ab1!? b6 26 ♖xd2 with the idea 26...bxc5? 27 bxc5 when White threatens to invade on b7 or f7, but the patient 26...♗ab8! looks fine for Black.

13...♙e6

Instead 13...♗h8 looks too slow. White has:

a) 14 ♖b4 ♘e8 15 ♙d2 a6 16 ♘a3 ♗e7?! 17 fxe5 ♜xf1+ 18 ♜xf1 ♙xe5 19 ♙f4 left White better developed in V.Moskalenko-A.Cabrera, Ampolla (rapid) 2006, but 16...♘f6 looks satisfactory for Black.

b) 14 ♗a3! is an improved version: for example, 14...♘e8 15 ♙d2 and now 15...a6 can simply be met with 16 fxe5! with a threatening lead in development.



14 ♖b4 ♘e8 15 ♙d2

Instead Moskalenko gives 15 f5 ♙f7 as unclear. White has gained space but there is no pressure on the black centre anymore.

15...a6 16 ♘a3 ♜b8

Another option is 16...b6 17 ♜f3 and now:

a) 17...exf4!? 18 ♜xf4 (18 ♙xf4 g5) 18...♜xf4 19 ♙xf4 ♙e5 looks solid enough.

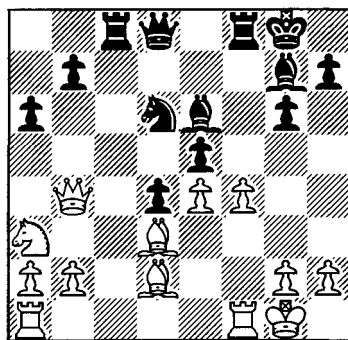
b) 17...♜a7!? 18 ♜af1 (18 f5!?) 18...♜af7 19 ♗a4 ♙c8 20 ♘c2 ♙b7 21 ♘b4 ♘c7 22 ♗d1 ♘e6 23 fxe5 ♜xf3 24

♜xf3 dxe5 25 ♘d5 ♙xd5 26 cxd5 ♘c5 27 ♙c2 b5?! (27...a5 looks like a better try) 28 g3 ♘b7 29 ♜xf8+ ♙xf8 30 ♗g4 and White had the initiative in V.Moskalenko-P.Toledano Luna, Barcelona 2009.

17 c5?!

Instead 17 fxe5 dxe5 18 c5 b5! gave Black good play in V.Moskalenko-L.Perpinya Rofes, Catalonia 2003, while Moskalenko has suggested 17 ♜f3!?. Here I think Black should play 17...exf4 18 ♜xf4 (18 ♙xf4 g5) 18...♙e5 (other possibilities are 18...♜xf4 19 ♙xf4 ♙e5 and 18...♙f7!? with the idea of ...♘c7-e6) 19 ♜xf8+ ♗xf8 20 ♜f1+ ♗g7 with a good position.

17...dxc5 18 ♗xc5 ♜c8 19 ♖b4 ♘d6

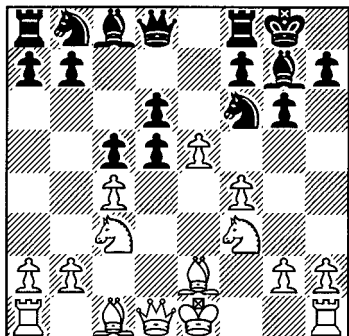


Black's knight is on an ideal square. It covers b7 and c4, pressures e4 and it may drop back to f7 to control e5.

20 ♜ac1 ♜xc1 21 ♙xc1 b5

Black has good play all over the board and the a3-knight had trouble getting into the game in A.Alonso Roselli-L.Perpinya Rofes, Barbera del Valles 2007.

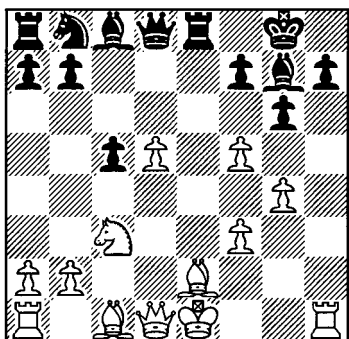
D) 7 d5 e6 8 ♖e2 exd5 9 e5?!



This line is rarely played nowadays. If Black replies correctly, White probably cannot even equalize.

9...♖e4!

After 9...dxe5 10 fxe5 ♖g4 11 ♖g5 or 9...♗fd7 10 cxd5 dxe5 11 0-0 White can hope to gain the initiative, but 9...♖g4! is a decent alternative that was played by a young Kasparov. After 10 cxd5 (if 10 h3 d4 11 ♗e4 ♖xe5! 12 fxe5 dxe5 and Black will be playing a 'Four Pawns Attack' himself!) 10...dxe5 11 h3 e4 12 hxg4 (Black is better after 12 ♗xe4 ♖e8!) 12...exf3 13 gxf3 ♖e8 14 f5 a critical position is reached:



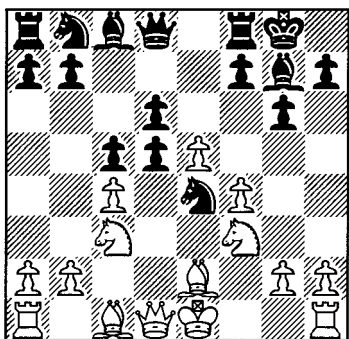
a) 14...♝b6 15 ♖h6 (praised by Kasparov, but this now looks suspicious) 15...♝xb2 (15...♖xh6 16 ♖xh6 ♝xb2 looks good too) 16 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 17 f6+ (according to Kasparov's old *Informant* notes, Black has problems after 17 ♖c1 gxf5! 18 ♖c2 ♝b4 19 ♝d2 f4 20 ♝d3 f5 21 gxf5 ♗d7, but I cannot find a good continuation for White) 17...♗g8 18 ♝c1 ♝b4! 19 ♗f1 ♗d7 20 ♖b5 ♝d4 21 ♗g2 ♖e3 22 ♗e2 ♝e5 23 ♗f2 ♖xe2+ 24 ♖xe2 ♗xf6 and Black was much better in A.Vaisser-G.Kasparov, Moscow 1981.

b) 14...b6 15 fxc6 fxc6 (after 15...hxc6 16 ♗e4 ♖xc6 17 ♖g5 f6 18 ♖h6 ♗d7 19 ♝d2 White had a strong attack in N.Povah-J.Bohak, correspondence 1984) 16 ♗f1 ♖a6 17 ♗e4 ♝d7 18 ♗g2 ♖xe2 19 ♝xe2 ♗a6 was J.Fries-Nielsen-E.Mortensen, Esbjerg 1985. Here 20 d6!, as given by Konikowski and Soszynski, causes some problems.

c) 14...gxf5 15 ♖h6 ♖xc3+ 16 bxc3 fxc4 17 ♝d3 (after 17 ♖h5 gxf3 18 ♗d2 ♖g4 19 ♖xf3 ♖xh5 20 ♖xh5 ♝xd5+ 21 ♗c2 ♝f5+ 22 ♗b2 Konikowski and Soszynski give 22...♝f2+!, but 17 ♝d2 ♖f5 18 0-0-0 would be very unclear) 17...♝f6 18 ♖h5 (not 18 0-0-0? ♖f5 19 ♝d2 ♖xe2, but 18 fxc4!? ♖xc4 19 0-0-0 ♖xe2 20 ♖dg1 seems to force a draw after 20...♝g6 21 ♖xc4 ♝xc4 22 ♝xe2! ♝xe2 23 ♖g1+) 18...♖e5 19 ♖xe5 ♝xe5 20 fxc4 (20 0-0-0!?) 20...♖xc4 was I.Belin-O.Kalinin, USSR 1987. Here 21 0-0-0! is best, with chances for both sides.

d) 14...♗d7 15 ♖h6 ♖xh6 16 ♖xh6

♠e5 17 ♖f2 gxf5 18 ♗c2 ♜g5 19 ♚ah1 ♜f4! 20 ♔g2 (after 20 ♚xh7 ♜xg4+ 21 ♔e1 Black has a draw with 21...♜g3+ 22 ♔d2 ♜f4+ or he can try for more with 21...♜xf3!?) 22 ♚h8+ ♔g7 23 ♚1h7+ ♔g6) 20...♜g6 21 ♚xh7 ffg4 (21...♜d7 was suggested by Ravisekhar, but 22 d6! gives White unnecessary chances) 22 ffg4 ♜xg4 23 ♚h8+ ♔g7 24 ♚8h7+ ♔g8?! 25 ♚h8+ ½-½ was R.Ravisekhar-P.Thipsay, Indian Championship 1983. However, Black could have played 24...♔f6! when 25 ♚f1 ♜f5! breaks the pin because 26 ♚xf4 ♜xf4+ is check.



10 cxd5

White may be better off with 10 ♜xd5, but Black can still fight for an advantage:

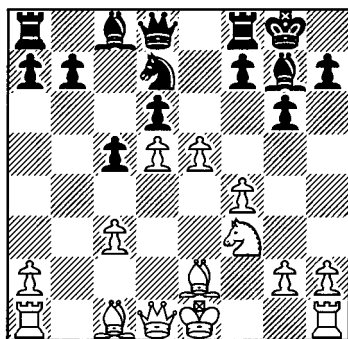
a) 10...dxe5 is uncommon, but it is simple enough. After 11 fxe5 ♜c6 12 ♗c2 f5 13 exf6 ♜xf6 Black is already better: for example, 14 ♜g5 (or 14 0-0 ♜f5 15 ♜b3 ♚e8 with the initiative) 14...♜f5 15 ♜b3 ♜d7 16 ♚d1 ♜xd5 17 ♚xd5 ♜e6 18 ♚d2 ♜d4 19 ♜xd4 cxd4 and White was busted in G.Steffens-T.Zwicker, correspondence 1988.

b) 10...♜c6 is also good enough, but Black must take some care: 11 ♗c2 (Black is also a little better after 11 ♜d3 f5 12 exf6 ♜xf6 13 0-0 ♜xd5 14 cxd5 ♜d4 15 ♜g5 ♜f5) 11...f5 12 0-0 (worse is 12 exd6 ♜xd6 13 0-0 ♜e6 with a big advantage in N.Povah-J.Howell, London 1994) 12...dxe5 13 fxe5 ♜xe5 14 ♜f4 and now:

b1) 14...♜c6 keeps the pawn, but White is able to generate some activity: 15 ♚ad1 g5 (15...♜d4 16 ♜xd4 ♜xd4+ 17 ♔h1 with the idea of ♜f3 is not so simple) 16 ♜c7 ♜e8 17 ♜d3 g4 18 ♜h4 with unclear play in J.Kracht-P.Schmitz, correspondence 2009.

b2) 14...♜xf3+ is untried but looks better. Black gives back the pawn but develops quickly: 15 ♜xf3 ♜e6 16 ♜xe4 (16 ♜c7 ♜d4+ 17 ♔h1 ♜xc4 gives Black good play) 16...fxe4 17 ♜xe4 ♜xd5 18 cxd5 ♜d7 gives Black good play. The d5-pawn is not so dangerous and Black's bishop is very strong.

10...♜xc3 11 bxc3 ♜d7!



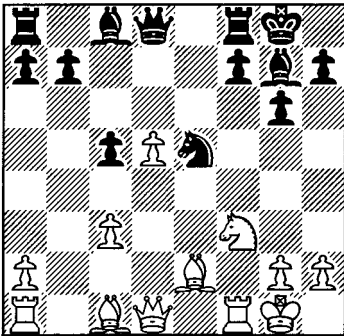
White cannot support his centre. This idea has been known for a long

time and White has not been able to repair the line.

12 0-0

After 12 e6 fxe6 (instead Black can play 12...xc3+ 13 d2 xd2+ 14 Wxd2 fxe6 15 g5 b6 16 dxe6 xe6 17 0-0 f5 18 g4 c8 with two extra pawns, but after 19 aac1 e7 20 f3 White has the initiative) 13 dxe6 b6 Black is just much better. He is ahead in development and the pawns are ready to fall: 14 0-0 (instead 14 Wb3 e7 wins the pawn anyway, while 14 g5 xc3+ 15 d2 d4! leaves White in a mess) 14...xe6 15 g5 d5! and Black is a pawn up with the better position.

12...dxe5 13 fxe5 xe5

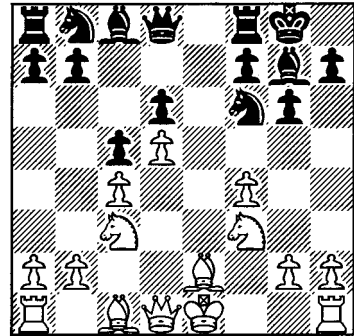


It is difficult to discern what White has for the pawn.

14 e3 xf3+ 15 xf3 Wd6! 16 Wd2 e5 17 h3 b6 18 h6 e8 19 aae1 a6 20 e2 xe2 21 xe2 c4 22 ef2 e7 23 h1 ae8 24 g5 d7 25 e2 Wxd5

Black was up two pawns for nothing in Li Zunian-F.Gheorghiu, Dubai Olympiad 1986. This old game still shows ideal play for Black.

E) 7 d5 e6 8 e2 exd5 9 exd5



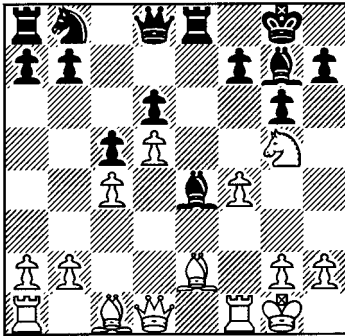
This unnatural move is also uncommon. White gives up his large pawn centre and weakens all the squares on the e-file in the hope of creating an attack with the lone f-pawn. This line is another recommendation of Taylor's. While White's attacking chances should not be taken too lightly and this line is not as bad as 9 e5?!, it is rather inconsistent with the spirit of the Four Pawns Attack.

9...e8

This is the main line and looks the most logical. Black takes control of the e-file and will seek to exchange some pieces, as he does have less space. There are several other options such as the blocking idea 9...h5 10 0-0 xc3 11 bxc3 f5 (which looks a bit suspicious), and 9...a6 with the idea of ...b5 as advocated by Bologan.

Another way for Black to focus his forces along the e-file is with the immediate 9...f5!? 10 0-0 e4 (10...e8 transposes to the main line) 11 xe4 xe4 12 g5 (12 d3 xd3 13 Wxd3

♘d7 is fine for Black) 12...♖e8 (not 12...♙f5?! 13 g4 ♙c8 14 f5) and now White has:



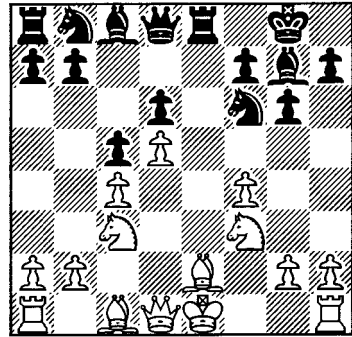
a) 13 f5 is somewhat thematic, but asks too much of the white position: 13...♙xf5 14 ♙d3 ♙xd3 15 ♖xd3 ♙f6 16 ♘e4 (instead 16 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 17 ♙g5 ♘d7 18 ♖xf6+ ♘xf6 19 ♖f1 does not work after 19...♙g8 20 ♙xf6 ♖d7, while 16 ♖f3 ♘d7 17 ♘e4 ♙d4+ 18 ♖h1 f5! leaves Black a good pawn up, because 19 ♘xd6 fails to 19...♘e5) 16...♙d4+ 17 ♖h1 f5! 18 ♘g5 ♘d7 19 ♘e6 ♘e5 20 ♖g3 ♖xe6! 21 dxe6 ♖f6 22 ♙g5 ♖xe6 and with two pawns for the exchange, Black was better in F.Mahn-T.Paehzt, Bad Wörishofen 1998.

b) 13 ♘e4 ♖xe4 14 ♙d3 ♖e8 and now:

b1) 15 ♖b1 ♘d7 16 a3 ♙d4+ 17 ♖h1 ♙e3 18 ♖e1 ♙xc1 19 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 20 ♖xc1 ♖e3 21 g3 ♖e8 and Black had a nice advantage in R.Wade-T.Petrosian, Belgrade 1954.

b2) 15 f5 was Taylor's suggestion: 15...♘d7 16 fxg6 hxg6 17 ♖b1 ♘e5 18

♙e2 and here Taylor gives the very strange 18...a5?! leading to an advantage for White. This is debatable, but 18...♖e7 (18...f5!? with the idea of ...♘f7 is also possible) gives Black a good game: 19 b4?! is well met by 19...♘d7! 20 ♙d3 cxb4 21 ♖xb4 ♘c5 with a great position for Black.

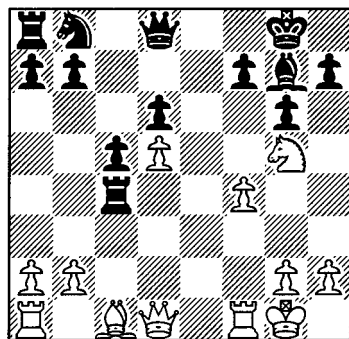
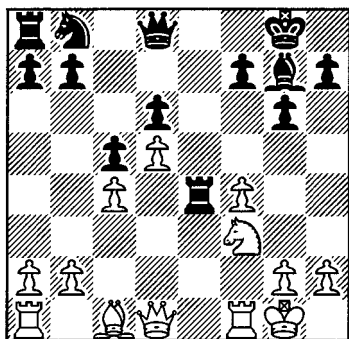


10 0-0 ♙f5

Black can also play 10...♘g4, although neglecting to develop is more risky. After 11 h3 ♘e3 12 ♙xe3 ♖xe3 13 ♖d2 ♖e8 14 ♙d3 ♘d7 15 ♖ae1 ♖xe1 (or 15...♘f6) 16 ♖xe1 ♘f6 (this has scored well for Black, but Taylor only gives the hideous 16...♘f8) 17 g4 (17 f5 could even be met by 17...♘d7!?) 17...♙d7 18 f5 gx f5 19 gx f5 ♖f8! White has more space, but Black has the bishop-pair.

11 ♙d3 ♖d7

Black maintains the blockade of the f5-square. Instead 11...♙xd3 12 ♖xd3 ♘bd7 13 ♙d2 a6 14 a4 leaves White with an easy space advantage, but 11...♘e4 is sensible, as after 12 ♘xe4 ♙xe4 13 ♙xe4 ♖xe4 two sets of minor pieces have been exchanged.



White has:

a) 14 f5 was suggested by Taylor.

This is not bad, but he ignores the simple 14...d7 (he only considers the risky 14...xc4, as well as the compliant 14...xf5 and 14...h6) 15 fxg6 hxg6 when Black has little to fear.

b) 14 d3 e7 (Black could also play 14...e8 15 f5 d7) 15 f5 d7 16 g5 f6 17 fxg6 hxg6 18 d2 e5 19 f3 e4 with a repetition.

c) 14 c2 e7 15 d2 d7 16 ae1 e8 17 xe4 xe4 18 b3 d4+! 19 h1 f6 20 h3 e2 21 e1 f2 (Black can also play 21...e4!? 22 xe2 g3+ 23 h2 f1+ with a perpetual check draw) 22 xe8+ xe8 23 xb7 f6 with a strong initiative for the pawn in A.Bergqvist-H.Kracke, correspondence 1956.

d) 14 g5 is critical: 14...xc4!? (this reply is very risky, but may just about be playable; safer is 14...e7 15 f5 d7 16 fxg6 hxg6 17 f3 and now not 17...f6 18 d2 d7 19 c3 with strong pressure, but 17...b6! with the idea of ...ae8).

Now White has:

d1) 15 f5 d7 (15...f6? loses after 16 fxg6 hxg6 17 xf7! xf7 18 g5 d7 19 e2: for example, b5 20 xf6+ xf6 21 e6+ g7 22 f1) 16 fxg6 fxg6 17 e6 h4 18 xg7 xg7 19 b3 e4 20 b2+ g8 21 d3 ae8 was M.Chiminello-M.Olesen, Chicago 1993. This looks risky, but Black is well centralized and has an extra pawn.

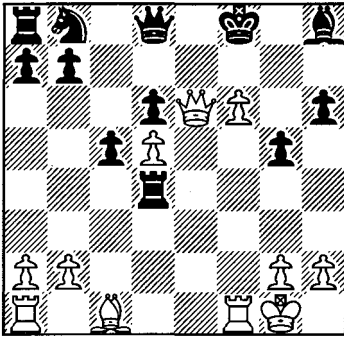
d2) 15 e2 xc1! (after 15...b4, 16 f5! looks simpler than 16 xf7 which has been played a couple of times) 16 axc1 d7 and now:

d21) 17 h1 f6 18 f5 h6 19 e4 g5 20 xf6+ xf6 gave Black decent compensation in M.Singleton-S.Pinkovetsky, correspondence 1984.

d22) After 17 b3 f6?! 18 f5 e8 19 f3?! e5 20 cd1 e8 Black had compensation in M.Orsag-A.Vaulin, Prague 1989, but 19 xe8+ xe8 20 fxg6 hxg6 21 ce1 would favour White. Instead Black could have tried 17...b6!?

d3) 15 d3 is considered to be the most dangerous, but I think Black can survive after 15...d4 16 h3 h6 17

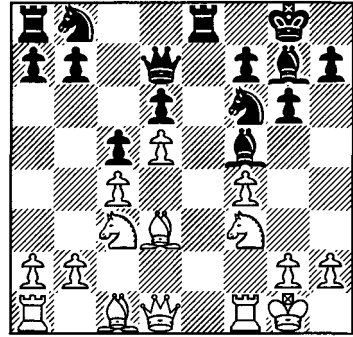
♠xf7! ♖xf7 18 ♜e6+ ♗f8 19 f5 g5 20 f6
♙h8 and now:



d31) 21 f7 and now the untried 21...♗d7! is forced (instead 21...♙g7 is crushed by 22 ♙xg5 hxg5 23 ♜ae1 and 21...♗a6 loses to 22 ♜xh6+ ♙g7 23 ♜h7). Following 22 ♜xh6+ .♙g7 23 ♜h7 (White is also struggling after 23 ♜g6 ♗e5 24 ♜h7 ♗xf7 and 23 ♜xd6+ ♜e7 24 ♜xe7+ ♗xe7 25 ♙xg5+ ♗f8 26 ♜ae1 ♗e5 27 ♜f5 ♜xd5, as indicated by Konikowski and Soszynski) 22...♙g7 23 ♜h7 (or 23 ♜g6 ♗e5 24 ♜h7 ♗xf7) 23...♗f6 24 ♜g6 ♜e7 25 ♙xg5 ♜xf7 26 ♜f5 ♜xd5 27 ♜f4 ♜xg5 28 ♜xg5 ♗g8 I prefer Black.

d32) 21 ♜f5 was suggested by Konikowski and Soszynski. They give 21...♗d7 22 ♜h7 ♙xf6 23 ♜xh6+ ♗g8 24 ♜g6+ ♗h8 25 ♙xg5 ♜g8 26 ♙xf6+ ♗xf6 27 ♜xf6+ ♜g7 28 ♜f3 with a big advantage for White. However, Black can improve with 24...♙g7! 25 ♜f7 (25 ♜f7+ ♗h8 26 ♜h5+ ♗g8 27 ♜f7+ is a draw) 25...♜d1+ 26 ♗f2 ♜f8! 27 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8+ which is not clear at all.

Now we return to 11...♜d7.



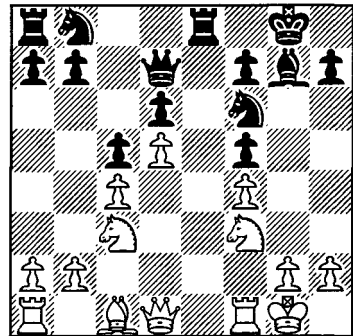
12 ♜c2

White tries to force the exchange of bishops to break Black's hold on the f5-square. Others:

a) 12 ♗h4 also looks to break the hold on f5, but the knight is not well placed here: 12...♙xd3 13 ♜xd3 ♗g4 (or 13...♗a6 14 a3 ♜g4!? 15 ♗f3 ♗h5) 14 ♗f3 ♗a6 15 a3 f5 16 h3 ♗f6 17 ♗g5 ♗c7 18 ♙d2 ♜ab8 with equal chances in J.Horvath-C.Foisor, Timisoara 1993.

b) 12 ♙xf5 was Taylor's recommendation. Black has a choice of recaptures:

b1) 12...gx f5!? is actually a rather standard idea.



Black has good light-square control

and it is not easy to exploit the weaknesses in his structure. After 13 ♖d3 ♘a6 14 a3 ♘e4 15 ♙e3 (15 ♙d2 may be better; it is similar to the main line except the white queen is on d3 instead of c2, so at least it controls the b5-square) 15...♘c7 16 ♚a1 ♙e7 (interesting alternatives are 16...♙xc3!? 17 bxc3 a6 and 16...b5!? 17 cxb5 ♚ab8 18 a4 a6 with counterplay) Taylor gives 17 ♙f2 intending ♙h4. Following 17...♚a8 18 ♙h4 ♙xc3! 19 bxc3 f6 with the idea of ...♗g7 the position is double-edged.

b2) 12...♗xf5 is also possible. After 13 ♗b3 I like the look of 13...♘a6! (both 13...♗d7 14 f5 and 13...b6 14 ♘b5 ♗d7 15 f5! give White the initiative) 14 ♗xb7 ♘b4 with excellent play for the pawn.

c) With 12 h3 White looks to break the f5-blockade in the most basic way. After 12...♘a6 13 a3 (the immediate 13 g4 ♙xd3 14 ♗xd3 ♘b4! leaves White in trouble after 15 ♗d1 h5! or 15 ♗b1 ♘xg4 16 hxg4 ♗xg4+ 17 ♙f2 ♙d4+! 18 ♘xd4 cxd4 19 ♘e4 ♗h4+ 20 ♙g2 d3 with a winning attack for Black) 13...♘c7 14 g4 Black has:

c1) 14...♙xd3 15 ♗xd3 b5! (this Benko Gambit idea is the simplest) 16 cxb5 ♚eb8 17 a4 a6 18 bxa6 ♘xa6 and Black had excellent compensation for the pawn in K.Hagglof-S.Asplund, correspondence 1979.

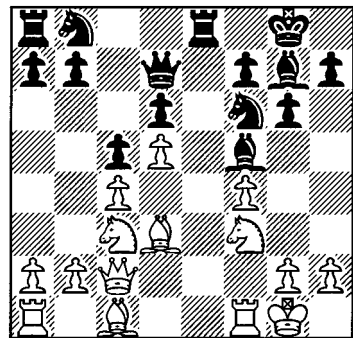
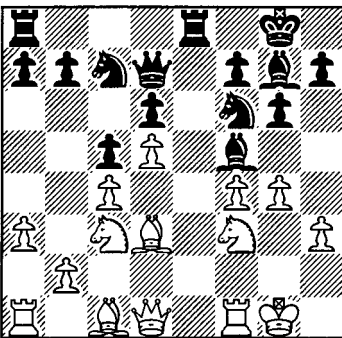
c2) 14...♙xg4 is well-known to be sufficient, but it should probably only lead to a draw. After 15 hxg4 ♗xg4+ White has:

c21) 16 ♙h1 ♗h3+ 17 ♙g1 (or 17 ♘h2 ♘h5) 17...♘g4 and Black has a strong attack.

c22) 16 ♙f2 ♗h3 17 ♗g1 (after 17 ♘e2 ♘g4+ both 18 ♙g1 and 18 ♙e1 run into 18...♙e3!) and now the patient 17...♙e7!? looks good.

c23) 16 ♙h2 ♗h5+ 17 ♙g2 ♗g4+ 18 ♙h2 b5 19 ♗g1 ♗h5+ 20 ♙g3 (after 20 ♙g2 Black should probably just take the perpetual) 20...bxc4 21 ♙xc4 ♙e7 (21...♗g4+ would still draw, as 22 ♙f2 ♗h3! favours Black) was S.Conquest-J.Mestel, Hastings 1986/87. Here White could have played 22 ♘h4!? with chances to fight off the attack.

Returning to 12 ♗c2:



12...♖a6!

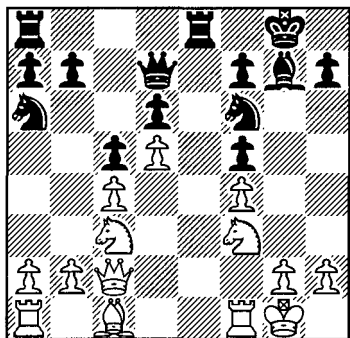
Black accepts doubled f-pawns. Also sufficient is 12...♙xd3 13 ♖xd3 ♖a6 14 a3 ♗c7 15 f5 (15 ♙d2 could be met by 15...♞ab8, 15...a6 or even the immediate 15...b5!?) 15...♞ab8 16 fxg6 hxg6 17 b3 (if 17 a4 ♖a6!?) or 17...a6 18 a5 b5 19 axb6 ♞xb6) 17...b5 with good play in B.Glembek-K.Hildner, correspondence 2000.

13 ♙xf5

Or 13 a3 ♗c7 14 ♙d2 b5!

13...gxf5

Note that Black cannot play 13...♖xf5? because 14 ♖xf5 gxf5 15 ♗h4 ♗e4 16 ♖b5! wins the f5-pawn for nothing.



14 a3

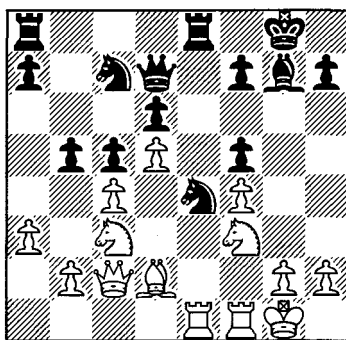
Instead 14 ♙d2 ♗e4?! 15 ♞ae1 ♖b4 16 ♖b1 ♙d4+ 17 ♗h1 ♗f2+ 18 ♞xf2 ♙xf2 backfires after 19 ♞f1 ♙e3 (or 19...♙d4 20 ♗h4) 20 ♙xe3 ♞xe3 21 ♗h4 when White has a strong initiative. If 21...♗d3 22 ♗d1! wins, for example. Here it is better to play 14...♖b4 immediately. After 15 ♖b1 ♗e4 16 a3 ♖a6 17

♖c2 ♗c7 we transpose back into the main line, but with a couple of extra moves for each side.

14...♗e4

14 a3 is quite playable, but Black can play 14...♗c7 15 ♙d2 b5 16 cxb5?! (or 16 b3 ♗e4 17 ♞ae1 ♗xd2 18 ♖xd2 a5!?) with counterplay) 16...♗fxd5 17 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 18 ♗h4?! ♞e4 19 a4 ♞ae8 and he dominated the centre in V.Dommes-A.Petrushin, Odintsovo 2008.

15 ♙d2 ♗c7 16 ♞ae1 b5!



Black has excellent counterplay. For example:

a) 17 ♗e4 fxe4 18 ♞xe4 ♞xe4 19 ♖xe4 grabs a pawn, but after 19...♞e8 20 ♖c2 bxc4 21 ♖xc4 Black can play 21...♙xb2, 21...♖f5 or 21...♖b5!?

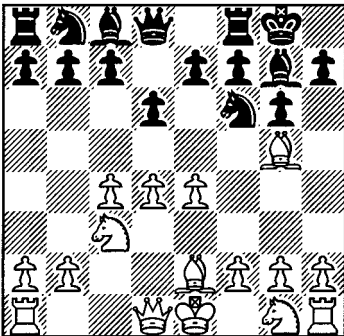
b) 17 b3 a5!? 18 ♗e4 fxe4 19 ♞xe4 ♞xe4 20 ♖xe4 a4! 21 cxb5 (if 21 b4 ♞e8) 21...axb3 22 b6 ♗e8 (this is better than 22...♖b5 23 a4 ♖a3 24 ♗g5) 23 ♖c4 b2 24 ♙c3 ♖f5 25 ♗d2 ♖c2 and Black had good chances in the complications in H.Schepers-W.Knebel, correspondence 2001.

Chapter 8

Averbakh Variation

6...c5 7 d5 h6

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♙g7 4 e4 d6 5
 ♙e2 0-0 6 ♙g5



The Averbakh Variation is no longer very popular, but it is flexible and dangerous. In many ways the Averbakh reminds me of the Gligoric Variation from Volume I. Its flexibility makes it rather annoying to face, but its blessing is also its curse – Black has a lot of choices and White must be ready for several different lines which lead to different pawn structures. The Gligoric remains very popular, however, while the Averbakh is

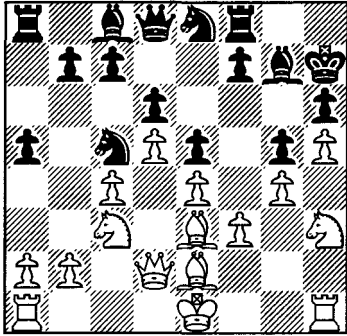
rarely seen these days. This could be ‘fashion’, but it could also illustrate what the top players think about these respective lines.

In this chapter we look at the challenging main lines of the Averbakh, while in the following chapter we look at a couple of other lines. Not much has been written about the Averbakh, although Margeir Petursson dedicated a whole book to the variation in 1996. Recently there has been very little literature, however, other than the required coverage in King’s Indian books for Black. In 2009 Glenn Flear devoted a couple of chapters to the Averbakh in *Dangerous Weapons: The King’s Indian*, so I will pay special attention to his recommendations for White.

There are many typical positions which Black must steer well clear of: for example,

6...h6 (note that the immediate 6...e5? just loses to 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♖xd8

♖xd8 9 ♗d5) 7 ♗e3 e5 8 d5 ♗bd7 9 ♗d2 ♗c5 10 f3 a5 11 g4 ♖h7 12 h4 ♗e8 13 h5 g5 14 ♗h3.

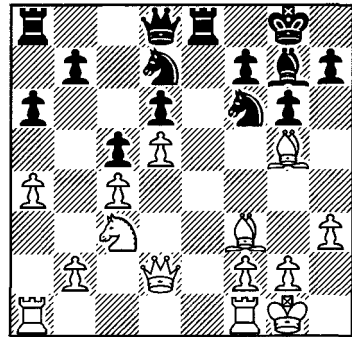


Here White has managed to lock up the entire kingside. All of the play will shift to the queenside, where White holds a natural advantage due his greater space. This type of position is almost always very good for White, even if he has castled long. The space advantage means more than anything and White can take his time. Again, Black may hold the position sometimes, but he is in for a long and miserable defence.

Another bad scenario arises like this: 6...c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♗d2 exd5 9 exd5 a6 10 a4 ♖e8 11 ♗f3 ♗g4 12 0-0 ♗bd7 13 h3 ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3.

In this Benoni-type structure where White plays exd5, Black must make sure to find a way to create counterplay. In this position, which follows an old theoretical line, Black has great difficulties. The pin on the f6-knight is not easily broken, and there is a good chance that the rooks will all be exchanged on the e-

file. Practice has shown that endgames in this structure are very difficult for Black because White has the bishop-pair, as well as a space advantage, and can gradually advance on both wings. The typical plan is to combine an eventual a4-a5 and b2-b4 break, while restricting Black on the other wing. Sometimes Black holds, and sometimes he does not, but he rarely wins. This structure is not inherently bad, however, and we will see some ways for Black to handle this structure in Line A1, as well as in Line C of the next chapter.

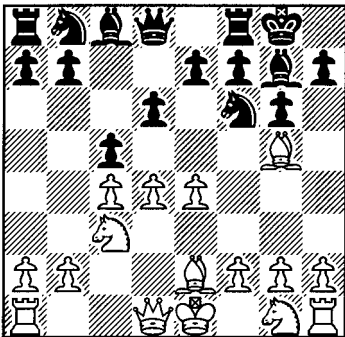


Over the last couple of decades, 6...♗a6 has emerged as Black's main defence to the Averbakh. With this popular move, Black defends the c7-pawn in preparation for ...e5. While 6...♗a6 is a good, solid line, it harbours many little subtleties and it is still not so easy to equalize in the main line 7 ♗d2 e5 8 d5. White will usually play ♗d1, ♗ge2 and f3 reaching a position similar to those in some lines of the Sämisch. Instead I have decided to go with something sharper, which will also expose

the reader to several different pawn structures that can arise in the King's Indian.

6...c5

Black cannot play 6...e5, but attacking the centre with ...c5 should always be considered in lines where White develops his queen bishop before his king-side. Sometimes Black plays 6...h6 7 ♖e3 c5 to avoid Line B, but 8 e5!? is rather annoying. I find this line to be impractical for Black, because there is a lot to know to just get a drawish ending. After 8...dxe5 9 dxe5 ♖xd1+ 10 ♜xd1 ♗g4 11 ♙xc5 ♗xe5 12 ♗d5 ♗bc6 13 f4 ♗g4 White has two sharp lines with 14 ♙f3 and 14 h3. I am not convinced that Black can equalize in these lines and there are a lot of pitfalls along the way. Indeed, I prefer the text move which allows Black to steer the play.

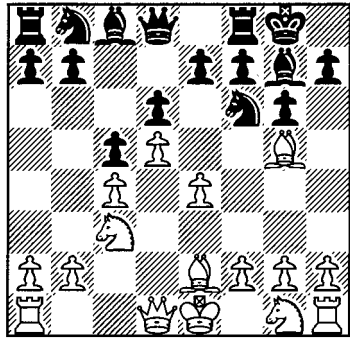


7 d5

This is the most important move. White gains space and challenges Black to find counterplay. Instead 7 dxc5 is covered in Chapter 9, while other moves are worse:

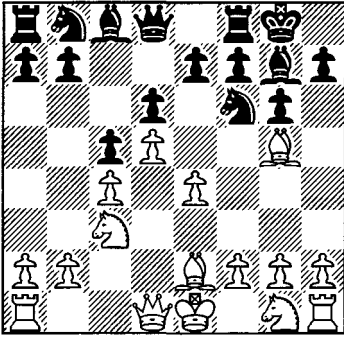
a) 7 e5? just loses a pawn after 7...cxd4 8 exf6 (or 8 ♖xd4 ♗c6) 8...exf6.

b) White can try to obtain a Maroczy structure with 7 ♗f3, but 7 dxc5 is a much better way to go about this. After 7...cxd4 8 ♗xd4 ♗c6 White's bishop looks funny on g5. Black could also consider 7...♖a5!? 8 ♖d2 (8 0-0 looks silly, because 8...cxd4 9 ♗xd4?? drops the bishop on g5 and 9 ♖xd4 just loses time to 9...♗c6) 8...♗c6 (Black should avoid 8...cxd4 9 ♗xd4 ♗xe4?! 10 ♗xe4 ♖xd2+ 11 ♗xd2 ♙xd4 12 ♙xe7) 9 dxc5 (if 9 d5 ♗d4!) 9...dxc5 10 0-0 ♙g4 which transposes to the note to White's 8th move in Line A of Chapter 9 and is comfortable for Black.



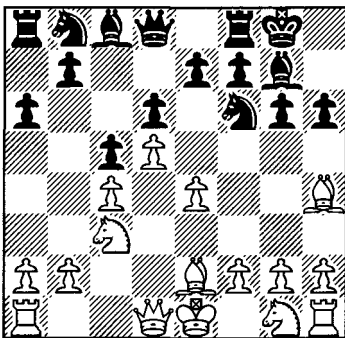
The text is the main line. White logically grabs space. Now Black can head into the sharp main lines or he can consider one of the lines of the next chapter. In either case Black will have to be familiar with Line A in Chapter 9. The choice of lines after 7 d5 depends a lot on taste. If the Averbakh becomes popular, it will be useful to know the critical lines of this chapter, while if it remains

a bit of rarity, one may prefer to have one of the sidelines ready.



7...h6

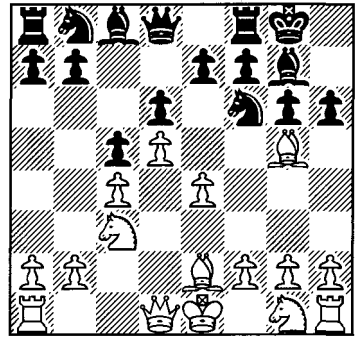
This is a very important move to play if Black wants to play ...e6. As mentioned above, 7...e6 8 ♖d2 exd5 9 exd5 leaves Black with a passive position. After 7...h6 White should avoid 8 ♗h4?! as the bishop is not effective here and may well be missed from the queenside. Black then has a few good options, including 8...a6 (playing a pure Benko with 8...b5 9 cxb5 a6 is also possible, while 8...♗a5 9 ♗d2 a6 is good as well, because 10 a4 can still be met with 10...b5!) and now:



a) 9 a4 ♗a5 10 ♗d3 (or 10 ♗d2 b5!) 10...g5 11 ♗g3 ♘xe4!? 12 ♗xe4 ♗xc3+ 13 bxc3 ♗xc3+ 14 ♖f1 f5 15 ♘e2 ♗f6 with a position similar to those we will see in Line E2 of Chapter 15 (the last line in the book!).

b) 9 ♘f3 b5! 10 cxb5 axb5 is good for Black because 11 ♗xb5 is met with the thematic 11...♘xe4! 12 ♘xe4 ♗a5+ 13 ♘c3 ♗xc3+ 14 bxc3 ♗xb5 when Black is much better. White cannot castle and ...♗a6 is coming. White is much weaker on the light squares than Black is on the dark squares and 15 ♗xe7? of course fails to 15...♗e8.

Instead 8 ♗d2 is playable, but after 8...e6 9 ♘f3 exd5 10 exd5 ♗e8, the bishop is just more passive than it is in Line A1.



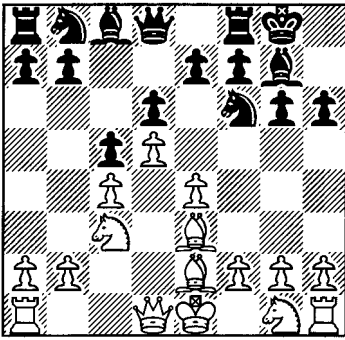
Therefore White has two sensible retreats:

- A: 8 ♗e3**
- B: 8 ♗f4**

The first move allows Black to obtain a decent Benoni position, while the sec-

ond move puts pressure on the d6-pawn to 'prevent' 8...e6.

A) 8 ♖e3



8...e6 9 ♖d2

White usually plays this move to attack the h6-pawn. Other moves are not common, but should not be completely ignored:

a) 9 e5 dxe5 10 ♖xc5 ♖e8 11 d6 ♖c6 has hardly been played and looks unclear.

b) 9 dxe6 ♖xe6 10 ♗d2 ♗h7 (10...♗b6!? 11 ♖xh6 ♖xh6 12 ♗xh6 ♗xb2 is Line B1) gives Black a development lead and good dynamic chances in return for the backwards d-pawn. Now:

b1) 11 ♖f3 ♖c6 12 0-0 ♖g4 13 ♖f4 ♖ge5 is fine for Black.

b2) 11 0-0-0 ♗a5 12 ♗xd6 ♖xe4!? 13 ♖xe4 ♗xa2 14 ♖d2 (forced) 14...♗a5+ (with the idea of ...♖d8) 15 ♖c1 ♖a6!? gives Black good attacking chances.

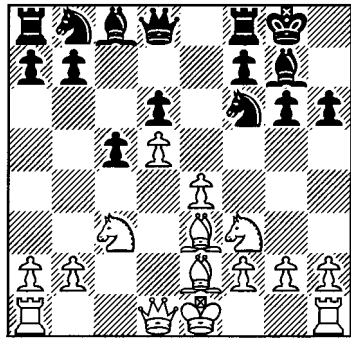
b3) 11 h3 ♖c6 12 ♖f3 ♗a5 (or 12...♗e7 13 0-0 ♖ad8) 13 0-0 ♖ad8 is dynamically equal.

c) 9 ♖f3 exd5 (Black could also play a

delayed Benoni with 9...♖e8!? 10 ♖d2 ♖a6) and now:

c1) 10 exd5 ♖e8 (or 10...♖g4 11 ♖d2 f5!? 12 0-0 ♖d7) 11 0-0 ♖f5 (11...♖xe3!? 12 fxe3 ♖g4 13 ♗d2 ♗e7 14 ♖d3 ♖d7 gave Black good practical chances in L.Valdes-D.Aldama, Cuba 1993) 12 h3 ♖e4 transposes to variation 'd2' below.

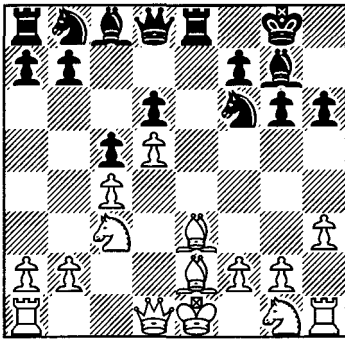
c2) 10 cxd5 creates an unusual Modern Benoni. This could prove to be an important position, but there is hardly any experience with it.



After 10...b5!? (a very typical Benoni idea; instead 10...♖e8 11 ♖d2 looks a little better for White) 11 ♖xb5 ♖xe4 12 ♖xe4 ♗a5+ 13 ♗d2 (instead 13 ♖c3 ♖xc3+ 14 bxc3 ♗xb5 15 ♗b3 ♖a6 16 ♗xb5 ♖xb5 17 ♖d2 ♖d3 18 ♖xh6 ♖e8+ 19 ♖d1 ♖d7 with the idea of ...♖b6 was very comfortable for Black in J.Donner-L.Portisch, Lugano Olympiad 1968) 13...♗xb5 14 ♖xd6 ♗xb2 (keeping the queens on and preventing White from castling with 14...♗a6!? was suggested by Mikhalevski) 15 ♗xb2 ♖xb2 16 ♖b1 ♖c3+ 17 ♖d2 ♖g7 (17...♖a6!?) 18 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 19 ♖c4 ♖d7 (instead Mikhalevski

gives 19...♖d8 20 d6 ♗d7 21 0-0 ♗e5 22 ♗xe5 ♙xe5 23 ♙xc5 ♙xd6 24 ♙e3 ♖g7 25 ♖b7 when Black should hold pretty easily) 20 0-0 ♖d8 21 ♖fd1 ♗b6 22 ♗xb6 axb6 23 ♖xb6 c4 24 ♖c6 c3 25 d6 ♖xa2 26 g3 White had a very small advantage in V.Korchnoi-P.Acs, Paks 2005.

d) 9 h3 exd5 10 exd5 (10 cxd5?! ♖e8 would force White to defend his e4-pawn in a clumsy fashion) 10...♖e8 and now 11 ♖d2 ♖h7 would transpose to Line A1, below. Instead:



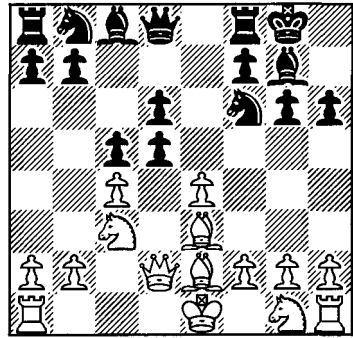
d1) 11 ♙d3 b5! 12 cxb5 (12 ♗xb5 ♗e4 gives Black good play) 12...♗bd7 13 ♗ge2 ♗e5!? (or 13...♗b6 14 ♖d2 ♗fxd5 15 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 16 ♙xh6 ♙xh6 17 ♖xh6 ♖f6 18 0-0 ♙b7 with counterplay in A.Kamenets-Z.Efimenko, Alushta 2000) 14 0-0 a6 15 bxa6?! (after 15 a4 ♖a5 Black has compensation, but this was still a better try) 15...♗xd3 16 ♖xd3 ♙xa6 17 ♖d2 ♖b8 18 ♖ab1 ♗d7 gave Black an excellent position in D.Steiner-A.Sznepik, Ljubljana 1981.

d2) 11 ♗f3 ♙f5 12 0-0 (more ambitious is 12 g4 ♙e4 13 0-0 ♙xf3 14 ♙xf3 ♗bd7 15 ♖d2 ♖h7, although White's

airy kingside should give Black fair chances for counterplay) 12...♗e4 13 ♗xe4 ♙xe4 14 ♙d3 (instead 14 ♖d2 ♖h7 15 ♖ae1 transposes to the note to White's 12th move in Line A1) 14...♙xf3!? (14...♙xd3 15 ♖xd3 ♗d7 is solid enough) 15 ♖xf3 ♗d7 was level in A.Beliavsky-M.Tal, Sochi 1986.

9...exd5

Now White must choose between different Benoni structures:



A1: 10 exd5
A2: 10 cxd5

The former could easily be called an 'Averbakh Benoni', while the latter transposes to a rather obscure Modern Benoni.

A1) 10 exd5

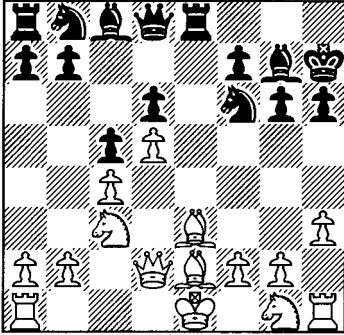
We have seen the dangers inherent in this structure if Black does not play purposefully. Now we will observe how Black can create counterplay.

10...♖h7 11 h3

Instead 11 ♗f3 ♖e8 12 0-0 ♙f5 in-

tending ... Δ e4 is similar to the next note.

11... \Re e8



12 Δ d3

White is trying to take away squares from Black's c8-bishop. However, it is clear that the last couple of moves have not done much for his development, so Black's reply is quite logical. Instead 12 Δ f3 Δ f5 13 0-0 Δ e4! reveals the advantage of having broken the pin on Black's knight. Black is able to exchange knights which then leaves him with enough room for his other minor pieces after 14 Δ xe4 Δ xe4 15 \Re ae1 Δ d7 (or 15... Δ a6) and now:

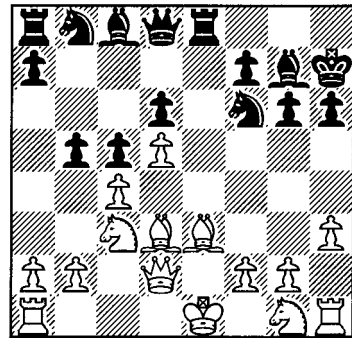
a) 16 b3 b5!? (or 16... \mathbb{W} b6) 17 cxb5 Δ b6 18 Δ c4 Δ xf3 19 gxf3 \mathbb{W} h4 20 Δ f4 was S.Mamedyarov-E.Berg, Khanty-Mansiysk Olympiad 2010. Here 20... Δ c3!? 21 \mathbb{W} xc3 \mathbb{W} xf4 gives Black some compensation for the pawn.

b) With 16 Δ h2!? White hopes to harass Black's e4-bishop. After 16... \mathbb{W} b6! Black has less space, but his pieces are active and he can even develop some initiative.

Following 17 b3 \mathbb{W} b4 18 \mathbb{W} c1 (not 18 f3? Δ c3, while 18 \mathbb{W} xb4 cxb4 19 Δ f3 Δ c3 20 \Re d1 was M.Marínangeli-L.Perdomo, Olavarria 2005, and here 20... Δ c5 looks good for Black) 18... \mathbb{W} c3! 19 Δ xh6 (19 Δ f3 \mathbb{W} xc1 20 \Re xc1 g5!? safeguards the light-squared bishop and gives Black good chances) 19... \mathbb{W} xc1 20 Δ xc1 Δ c3 21 Δ g4 f5 22 \Re e3 Δ d4 Black won material in I.Golichenko-K.Maslak, Pardubice 2009.

12...b5!

This is a typical idea. Black tries to open the position with White still underdeveloped. Another possibility is 12...a6 13 a4 Δ h5!? 14 Δ ge2 (if 14 Δ f3 Δ f4) 14... Δ d7 intending ... Δ e5 with counterplay.



13 Δ xb5

This move was recommended by Flear. After 13 cxb5 Black can play in Benko style with 13...a6!?, but generally Black keeps this idea in reserve and plays 13... Δ b7 when both ... Δ e5 and ... Δ b6 are in the air. White has:

a) 14 Δ f3 Δ b6 15 0-0 Δ b7 regains the pawn with a good position.

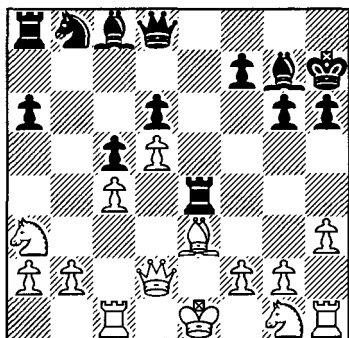
b) 14 $\text{g}2 \text{e}5$ 15 $\text{g}3$?! (better is 15 $\text{d}1$ transposing to variation 'c') 15... $\text{xd}3+$ 16 $\text{xd}3$ a6 17 0-0 axb5 18 $\text{xb}5$ $\text{b}7$ 19 $\text{f}4$ (or 19 $\text{c}3$ $\text{a}6$) 19... $\text{a}4$ (also good is 19... $\text{f}8$ or even 19... $\text{xd}5$ with the idea 20 $\text{xd}6$ $\text{c}6$ 21 $\text{xc}5$ $\text{f}4$!) 20 $\text{d}2$ was G.Garcia Gonzalez-W.Schmidt, Camaguey 1974. Now 20... $\text{xd}5$!? looks good when 21 $\text{b}3$ $\text{b}6$ 22 $\text{xf}7$ $\text{d}5$ 23 $\text{c}7$ $\text{c}4$ wins material.

c) 14 $\text{d}1$ $\text{e}5$ 15 $\text{ge}2$ a6 gives Black good play: 16 a4 (or 16 bxa6 $\text{xd}3+$ 17 $\text{xd}3$ $\text{xa}6$ with excellent compensation) 16... $\text{xd}3+$ 17 $\text{xd}3$ axb5 18 axb5 and now both the 18... $\text{f}5$ of J.Tisdall-F.Hellers, Ostersund 1992, and the 18... $\text{d}7$ of R.Berdichesky-J.Copie, correspondence 1999, give Black very good play.

13... $\text{e}4$ 14 $\text{xe}4$ $\text{xe}4$ 15 $\text{c}1$

This is the only decent way to protect the c4-pawn, but now White's knight will be pushed to the edge.

15...a6 16 $\text{a}3$



16... $\text{h}8$!

This is a nice geometric idea to in-

crease the pressure on White's queenside. Instead 16... $\text{g}5$ 17 $\text{f}1$ may be a little awkward for White, but Black has nothing clear, while 16... $\text{f}5$ 17 $\text{e}2$ $\text{g}5$ 18 $\text{c}2$! was Flear's idea.

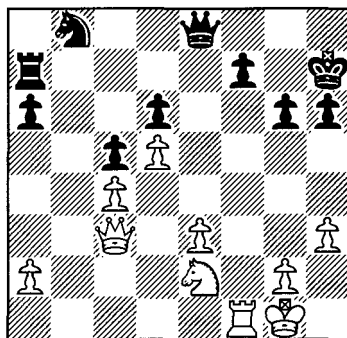
17 $\text{b}1$

Instead 17 $\text{c}2$ $\text{f}5$ 18 $\text{g}4$ $\text{xe}3+$ 19 $\text{xe}3$ $\text{xc}2$ 20 $\text{xc}2$ $\text{xb}2$ 21 $\text{e}2$ $\text{d}7$ 22 $\text{f}4$ $\text{e}8$ 23 $\text{d}3$ was W.Young-E.Barr, correspondence 2007. Now 23... $\text{f}6$!? 24 0-0 $\text{e}4$ is murky, but I would prefer to play Black.

17... $\text{f}5$ 18 $\text{e}2$ $\text{xe}3$

Black chooses to force matters. Instead 18... $\text{d}7$ 19 0-0 $\text{e}7$ 20 $\text{c}2$ $\text{e}5$ 21 $\text{b}3$ $\text{ae}8$ (not 21... $\text{hx}3$? 22 $\text{f}4$) gives Black some compensation for the pawn, while 18... $\text{h}4$!? looks funny, but Black is hitting the b1-rook while keeping the c4- and b2-pawns under attack.

19 $\text{fe}3$ $\text{xb}1$ 20 $\text{xb}1$ $\text{xb}2$ 21 0-0 $\text{a}7$ 22 $\text{bc}3$ $\text{xc}3$ 23 $\text{xc}3$ $\text{e}8$

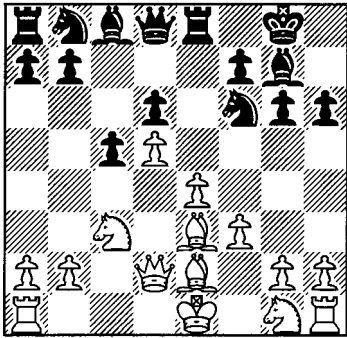


This position was unclear but balanced in G.Meins-G.Schebler, Duisburg 2003.

A2) 10 $\text{cxd}5$

This position could also come about from a Modern Benoni, but in practice it almost always arises from the King's Indian. If Black plays a couple of accurate moves he gets a very nice position.

10...♖e8! 11 f3



11...h5!

This is a high-class waiting move. Black does not want to obstruct his c8-bishop, because White cannot complete his kingside development so easily. Note that the immediate 11...a6?! allows 12 ♖xh6! ♗xe4 (this trick usually works, but not always!) 13 ♗xe4 ♖h4+ 14 g3 ♖xh6 15 ♖xh6 ♖xh6 16 ♗f6+ and White wins the exchange. The important features to observe here are: White has a minor piece blocking the e-file (so that 16 ♗f6+ is legal), while Black has a rook on e8 and has not played ...♗bd7 (which would protect the f6-square).

12 a4

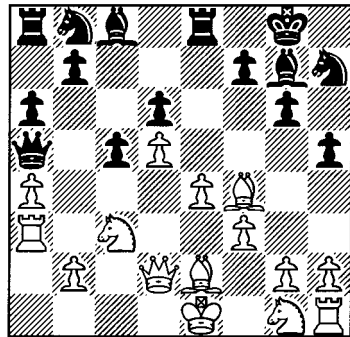
White responds with a waiting move of his own. Others:

a) 12 ♔d1 ♗bd7 (or 12...a6 13 a4 reaching the main line) 13 ♗ge2 (not 13 ♗h3? ♗e5 with the dual ideas of...♖xh3

and ...♗c4) 13...♗e5 14 b3 ♔d7 15 a4 a6 and again we transpose to the main line.

b) 12 h4 prepares to develop the g1-knight, but this advance weakens g4 and therefore e5, because a black knight may settle there and f3-f4 would allow ...♗e5-g4. After 12...a6 13 a4 Black can play either 13...♗bd7 14 ♗h3 ♗e5 15 ♗f2 ♔d7 or 13...♗h7 14 ♗h3 (14 g3 b6! 15 ♗h3 ♖xh3 16 ♖xh3 ♖a7 with the idea of ...♖ae7 gives Black a good position according to Seirawan). Then 14...♖xh3 15 ♖xh3 ♗d7 is very sensible, while 14...♖xh4+ 15 ♗f2 ♖e7 16 0-0-0 b5 is sharp and looks good for Black.

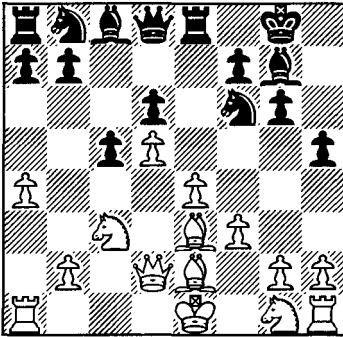
c) 12 ♔g5 a6 13 a4 ♖a5 14 ♖a3 (otherwise 14...b5) 14...♗h7 15 ♔f4 and here:



c1) 15...♖c7 is often not such a good square for Black's queen in the Benoni and here 16 a5 ♗d7 (instead 16...f5 17 ♗h3 fxe4 18 ♗xe4 ♖xh3 runs into 19 ♗xd6!, while the speculative 16...b5 17 axb6 ♖xb6 18 ♗b5! axb5 19 ♖xa8 ♔a6 was suggested by Bologan) 17 ♗h3 ♗e5 18 ♗f2 allowed White to reach his de-

sired set-up in J.Fedorowicz-L.Van Wely, Wijk aan Zee 1990.

c2) Very often 15...♚d8! is actually the best square for Black's queen, as from here it can survey both sides of the board. After 16 a5 both 16...♚h4+!? 17 ♖g3 ♚e7 and 16...f5 17 ♗h3 fxe4 18 ♗xe4 ♖xh3 19 gxh3 ♖e5 20 ♖g1 ♗f8 are interesting.



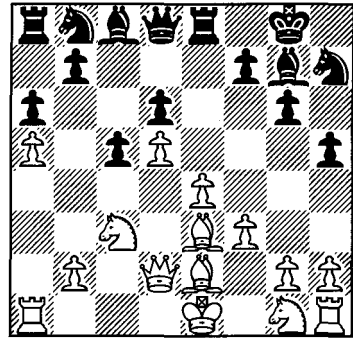
12...a6

This is always a useful move and now White will have to commit. This position could also arise from the Sämisch Variation if after 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 g6 (the Modern Benoni move order would be 2...c5 3 d5 e6 4 ♗c3 exd5 5 cxd5 d6 6 e4 g6 7 f3 ♖g7, 8 ♖g5 0-0 9 ♚d2 h6 10 ♖e3, transposing) 3 ♗c3 ♖g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 ♖g5 c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♚d2 exd5 9 cxd5 h6 10 ♖e3 h5 White played the strange-looking 11 ♖e2 (11 ♗ge2 is more normal) 11...a6 12 a4 ♖e8.

Note that 12...♗bd7?! is not very good because after 13 ♗h3! ♗e5 14 ♗f2 White achieves his ideal development. 12...♗a6 allows White to develop more naturally with 13 ♖b5 ♖d7 14 ♗ge2.

13 ♖d1

Instead 13 h4 just transposes to variation 'b' to White's 12th move, above. If White plays another waiting move with 13 a5, Black has 13...♗h7! (13...b5 14 axb6 ♚xb6 is also possible).

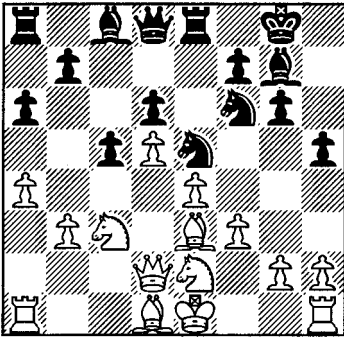


This keeps Black's development options open and creates the possibility of ...f5. After 14 ♖d1 ♗d7 15 ♗ge2 ♗e5 16 b3 ♚h4+ (Seirawan suggested 16...f5! 17 ♖c2 fxe4 18 ♖xe4 and then either 18...♗f6 or 18...c4 with good counterplay in both cases) 17 ♖f2 ♚f6 18 ♚e3 (18 0-0 ♗g5! 19 ♖h1? ♗exf3 wins for Black, so Seirawan suggested 18 ♖e3! inviting a repetition, although Black can play 18...h4) 18...h4! 19 h3 g5 20 0-0 ♖d7 21 ♖h1 ♗f8 22 ♖g1 ♗fg6 23 ♖h2, instead of 23...c4?! 24 ♖b1! which suddenly gave White good play of his own in the famous game Y.Seirawan-G.Kasparov, Skelleftea 1989, Seirawan suggests 23...♖h6 when Black has an excellent position. For complete annotations to this game, see Seirawan's excellent *Chess Duels: My Games with the World Champions*.

13...♖bd7 14 ♖ge2

Again with the bishop on d1, 14 ♖h3?! ♖e5 threatens both 15...♗xh3 and 15...♖c4.

14...♖e5 15 b3



15...♗d7

White's awkward development gives Black a couple of tempting possibilities. I like this simple developing move, but practice has also seen:

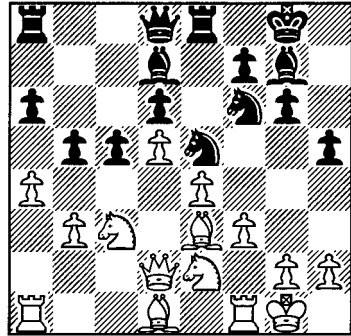
a) 15...b6!? 16 0-0 ♖b8 17 ♖c2 b5 18 h3 b4 19 ♖d1 c4 20 ♖f2 c3 was unclear in D.Yevseev-K.Sakaev, St Petersburg 1999.

b) 15...♗a5 was the choice of a young Topalov: 16 ♖a2 (if 16 0-0 b5) 16...c4 17 0-0 cxb3 (or 17...♖fd7 18 ♖b1 ♗c7 19 b4 a5 20 b5 ♖c5 with a good game for Black in D.Johansen-L.Hazai, Gold Coast 1999) 18 ♗xb3 ♖fd7 19 ♖b1 b6!? 20 ♗xa5 bxa5 21 ♖d2 ♖b8 22 ♖c2 ♖b4 23 ♖b3 ♖c4 24 ♖f2 ♖db6 25 ♖e1 ♖xd5! gave Black good play in J.Campos-V.Topalov, Palma de Mallorca 1992.

16 0-0

Instead 16 a5 b5 17 axb6 ♗xb6 18 0-0 a5 looks fine for Black.

16...b5

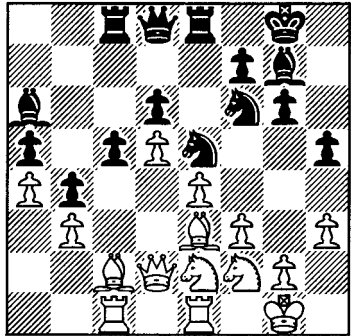


Black has easily achieved his thematic break. This does not necessarily give him an advantage, but Black should have a comfortable game.

17 ♖c2 b4 18 ♖d1 a5 19 ♖f2 ♖c8!

Black reroutes the bishop to a better diagonal and opens up the d7-square for his knights.

20 h3 ♖a6 21 ♖fe1 ♖c8 22 ♖ac1



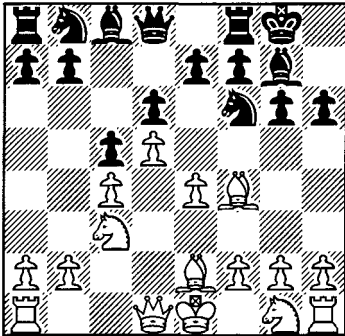
Black has a nice position with several ways to create play. The untried 22...c4!? and 22...♗e7!? are both possible, while practice has seen:

a) 22...♖xe2 23 ♗xe2 c4 24 f4 ♖d3?! (better was 24...♖ed7 25 bxc4 ♗c7 with

the idea of ...♘c5 with counterplay) 25 ♙xd3 cxd3 26 ♜xd3 ♝xc1 27 ♞xc1 ♜xe4? 28 ♜xe4 ♞e7 was A.Brossard-G.Hernandez, French League 2002. Now White could refute Black's play with 29 ♞c4! f5 30 ♜g5 ♞xe3+ 31 ♞xe3 ♞xe3 32 ♞c8+ ♙f8 33 ♜e6 when Black could resign.

b) 22...♞e7 23 ♖h1 ♞e8 24 f4 ♜ed7 25 e5 and here instead of sacrificing a piece with 25...♜xe5!? 26 fxe5 ♞xe5 27 ♜f4, as in S.Mohr-S.Panzalovic, German League 1997, Black could consider 25...dxe5 26 d6 exf4!? with the idea of 27 dxe7 fxe3 28 ♞xe3 ♜d5 with interesting play.

B) 8 ♙f4



This is the critical move. Now Black has to create some room for his minor pieces even at the cost of a pawn.

8...e6!

This is certainly more accurate than 8...e5 when 9 ♙e3! would give White good chances with the g4 and h4-h5 plan mentioned at the beginning of the chapter.

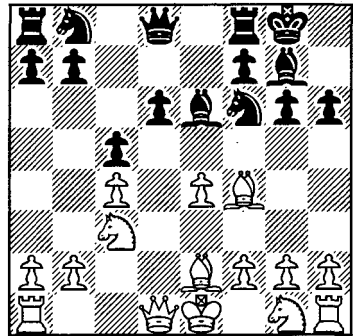
9 dxe6

Of course this is consistent with 8 ♙f4, but White could also develop. Black will not experience any particular problems, however. For example:

a) 9 ♜f3 exd5 10 exd5 ♞e8! 11 0-0 ♜e4 12 ♜xe4 ♞xe4 and White is losing time with the bishop. If 13 ♞d2, then 13...♞f6 is possible.

b) 9 ♞d2 exd5 10 exd5 11 ♜f3 ♙f5! 12 0-0 ♜e4 13 ♜xe4 ♙xe4 14 ♜e1 ♞f6 15 ♜d3 ♜d7 16 f3 ♙xd3 17 ♙xd3 ♞fe8 18 ♞fe1 ♞d4+ 19 ♖h1?! (this leaves White vulnerable on the back rank; better is 19 ♖f1 when 19...♞xb2?! 20 ♞xb2 ♙xb2 21 ♞xe8 ♞xe8 22 ♞b1 would be good) 19...♞xb2 20 ♞xb2 ♙xb2 21 ♞ab1 ♞xe1+ 22 ♞xe1 ♙e5 and Black had a healthy extra pawn in G.Groesman-F.Fiorito, Buenos Aires 1998.

9...♙xe6

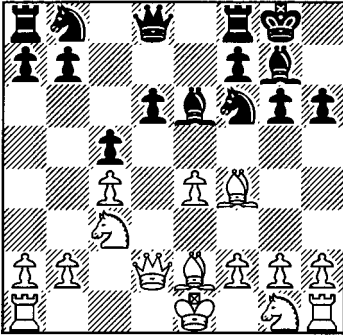


By offering a pawn, Black is able to develop quickly and effectively. White now has two ways to play. He can take aim at Black's slightly weakened king-side or he can snatch the d6-pawn. Both lines lead to fascinating play.

B1: 10 ♖d2

B2: 10 ♗xd6

B1) 10 ♖d2



This direct move, aimed at Black's kingside, is almost as popular as the pawn grab and it even scores better. However, if Black knows his stuff he obtains excellent counterplay.

10...♗b6!

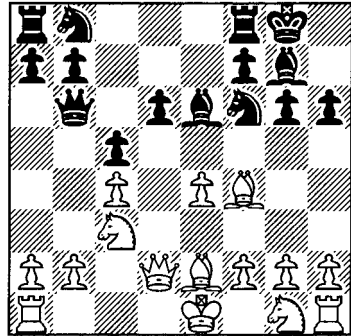
Black counterattacks the b2-pawn and prepares to meet 11 ♗xd6?! with 11...♗d8 12 e5 ♗e8. Other moves have been less successful:

a) 10...♗h7?! allows White to grab the d6-pawn with impunity, as 10 ♖d2 is certainly a more useful move than 10...♗h7. After 11 ♗xd6! ♗e8 12 e5! ♗fd7 13 f4 f6 14 h4! fxe5 15 h5 ♗c6 (no better was 15...♗f7 16 0-0-0! in C.Horvath-I.Armanda, Split 2001) 16 0-0-0 ♗d4 17 ♗d3 White's attack was too strong in E.Bareev-V.Akopian, Moscow 1990.

b) 10...♗a5 is supposed to be bad, but Black may be able to improve some-

somewhere: 11 ♗xh6 ♗xh6 12 ♖xh6 ♗xe4 13 ♗c1 ♗c6 (both 13...♗e8 and 13...♗xc3 deserve attention) 14 h4 ♗d4 15 ♗f1! ♗f5 16 ♖f4 ♗xc3 17 ♗xc3 ♖xa2 (oddly enough, almost twenty years later Uhlmann switched to the black cause, but he came out even worse: 17...♖b4 18 ♖c1 ♗g7 19 h5 ♗h8 20 ♗f3 ♖a5 21 ♗g5 ♗ae8 22 ♗ch3 ♗d4 23 ♗xe6+ ♗xe6 24 ♗g4 f5 25 hxg6! and White won quickly in K.Kachiani Gersinska-W.Uhlmann, German League 1999) 18 ♖c1 ♖a5 19 h5 and White had a strong attack in W.Uhlmann-I.Ujtumen, Palma de Mallorca 1970.

11 ♗xh6



Although this is the consistent move, White does not have to take the pawn:

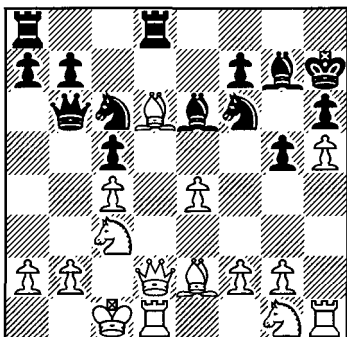
a) 11 ♗f3 ♗c6 12 0-0 ♗d4 13 ♗xd4 cxd4 14 ♗d5 ♗xd5 15 exd5 ♗e4 (this is better than 15...g5?! 16 ♗g3 ♗e4 17 ♖c2 f5 - safer is 17...♗xg3 18 hxg3 ♗fe8, but Black is still worse - 18 ♗d3 ♗xg3 19 hxg3 f4 20 gxf4 ♗xf4 21 ♖e2 and the opposite-coloured bishops just accentuated White's plus in M.Prchly-M.Hrozek, correspondence 1992) 16 ♖c2

♖fe8 17 ♗d3 ♜c5 was fine for Black in A.Aleksandrov-Y.Shulman, Ohrid 2001.

b) 11 0-0-0 ♖h7 (Black should also consider 11...h5!?) 12 h4 ♜c6 13 h5 (if 13 ♜f3 ♜g4) 13...g5 and now:

b1) 14 ♗xg5 hxg5 15 h6 ♗h8 (not 15...♗xh6 16 ♜f3 with a winning attack for White) 16 ♜f3 ♖g8 17 ♜xg5+ ♖xg5 18 ♗xg5 ♖g8 gives Black counterplay: 19 ♗d2 ♜g4 20 ♗xg4 ♖xg4 21 f3 ♖g6 22 ♜d5 ♗a6 23 ♖b1 ♗xc4 24 g4 ♜d4 25 b3 ♜xb3 0-1 was D.Rost-J.Copie, correspondence 2001.

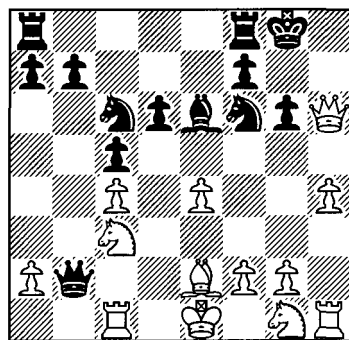
b2) 14 ♗xd6 ♖fd8 and then:



b21) 15 ♗e3?! ♜d4 (15...♜g4! looks even stronger) 16 e5 (16 ♗e7 ♜xe2+ 17 ♜gxe2 ♖xd1+ 18 ♖xd1 ♜g4 19 ♗xc5 ♜xf2 gave Black good counterplay in G.Forintos-A.Adorjan, Budapest 1973) 16...♜e8 was given as better for Black by Adorjan, although after 17 ♗e7 ♖d7 18 ♗d3+ ♖h8 19 ♗xg5 (instead 19 ♗f6?! ♜xf6 20 exf6 ♗xf6 is good for Black, while 19 ♜a4 ♗c7 20 ♗xc5 ♗xe5 gives Black good compensation for the pawn) 19...hxg5 20 h6 ♗f8 the position is rather unclear.

b22) 15 e5 ♜e8 (15...♜g4!?) 16 ♜a4 ♗a6 17 ♜xc5 ♗xa2 18 ♗c2+ ♖g8 19 ♜xe6 fxe6 20 ♖h3 ♗a1+ 21 ♗b1 ♗xb1+ 22 ♖xb1 ♜xe5?! 23 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 24 ♖e3 favoured White in C.Gouw-C.Van den Langenberg, correspondence 1994, but 22...♜xd6 23 exd6 ♜d4 looks okay for Black.

11...♗xh6 12 ♗xh6 ♗xb2 13 ♖c1 ♜c6 14 h4



Black has the better development and a good pawn structure, so White must play for an attack. The position quickly becomes very complicated, so we will consider a couple of possibilities in detail:

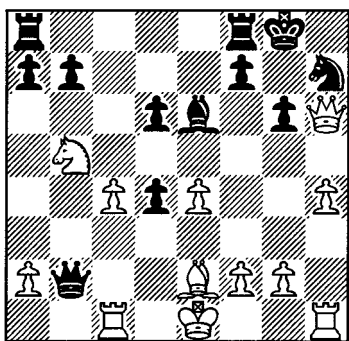
B11: 14...♜e5
B12: 14...♜b4

The alternatives seem worse, although there may be scope for improvements:

a) 14...♜d4 is perhaps the most obvious move, but White's attack will prove to be too strong: 15 h5! ♜c2+ 16 ♖d1 ♜g4 (Petursson notes that 16...♗xc3 17

hxg6 ♖d4+ 18 ♜xc2 ♜xe4+ 19 ♙d3 wins for White) 17 ♙xg4 ♙xg4+ 18 f3 ♜xc3 19 ♜xc2 ♖d3+ 20 ♜c1 ♙xh5 21 g4 ♜f1+ 22 ♜b2 b5? 23 ♜xh5 gxh5 24 ♜g5+ 1-0 M.Singleton-G.Green, correspondence 1986.

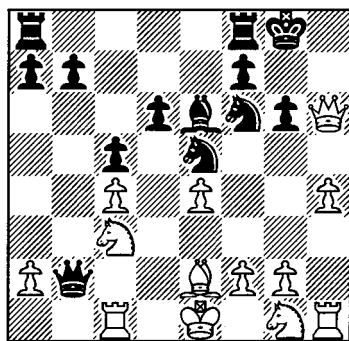
b) 14...♗h7 keeps lines closed on the kingside, but retreating from the centre allows White to obtain a positional advantage after 15 ♖f3 (not 15 h5? g5) 15...♗d4 (instead 15...♗e5 16 ♖xe5 dxe5 17 ♜e3 ♜ad8 18 h5 g5 was the game A.Grischuk-J.Ulko, Moscow (blitz) 2007, and here the simplest is 19 ♜b1, winning the b7-pawn) 16 ♗xd4 cxd4 17 ♖b5 (worse is 17 ♗d5 ♙xd5 18 exd5 ♖f6 when 19 h5? loses to 19...d3! with the idea 20 ♙xd3 ♖g4 and Black is also better after 19 ♜d2 ♜xd2+ 20 ♜xd2 ♗e4+) and now:



b1) 17...a6 18 ♗c7 ♜ac8 19 ♗xe6 fxe6 20 ♜h3 (20 ♜xg6+ ♜h8 gives Black good play) 20...♜c7?! (Black could try 20...♜f6!? with the idea of 21 ♜g3? d3!) 21 h5 gave White attacking chances in M.Pein-G.Botterill, Swansea 1987, and 21 ♜g3!? may be even stronger.

b2) 17...♜xa2 18 ♗xd4 ♜a5+ (18...♜fe8 19 0-0! was also good for White in I.Farago-R.Warthmann, Boeblingen 1995) 19 ♖d2 ♜xd2+ 20 ♜xd2 ♖f6 21 f3 ♜fd8 22 ♜e3 and White's space advantage gave him the better endgame in H.Bellmann-W.Saueremann, correspondence 2002.

B11) 14...♗e5



This is by far the most frequently played move. Black's attacks the c4-pawn, controls the d3-square, and a knight may go to g4 to chase away the white queen.

15 ♖h3

Adorjan points out that 15 h5? fails to 15...♖fg4 16 ♜f4 ♖xf2! overloading White's pieces. After the text, White cannot play ♖g5 so easily because the c1-rook is hanging, but he may even castle and then play h5. Black has several options here.

15...b5!?

This is very sharp, but so is everything else! Moreover, Black has tried just about everything:

a) 15...♙xh3 has been the main move, but it is probably just bad: 16 ♖xh3 ♗fg4 17 ♜f4 f5 18 ♖b1 ♜c2 19 exf5 (19 ♖c1 ♜b2 20 ♖b1 ♜c2 21 ♖c1 is a draw, as is the more complicated 19 h5 ♗xf2 20 ♜xf2 fxe4 21 ♜e3 ♗d3+ 22 ♙xd3 ♜xc3+ 23 ♜d2 ♜d4 24 ♜g5 ♜f2+ 25 ♗d1 exd3 26 ♜xg6+) 19...♜xf5 20 ♜e4 ♜xe4 21 ♗xe4 ♜f4 (after 21...b6 White has the unusual idea 22 ♖a3! intending ♖xb6) 22 f3 b6 23 ♖b3! intending g3 was clearly better for White in Y.Yakovich-A.Mololkin, Volgograd 1995.

b) 15...♙g4 could be worth further investigation, although 16 f3 ♙xh3 17 ♖xh3 ♗h7?! 18 ♗d1 (there are other good moves too) 18...♗d3!? 19 ♖c2 (not 19 ♙xd3? ♜xg2) 19...♜a1+ 20 ♗d2 ♜g1? (20...♗b4!?) 21 h5 g5 was L.Gofshtein-A.Frolov, Lutsk 1986, and now 22 ♙xd3! ♜xg2+ 23 ♗c1 ♜xh3 24 e5 wins for White.

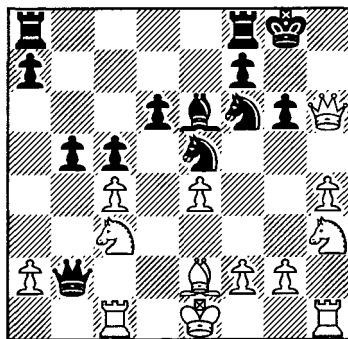
c) 15...♗fg4 16 ♜f4 ♙xc4 (White was a little better after 16...f5 17 0-0 ♖ae8 18 exf5 ♙xf5 19 ♜g3 ♗f6 20 ♗g5 ♗c6 21 ♙d3 ♗h5 22 ♜f3 in M.Sorokin-M.Babula, Pardubice 1992) 17 ♙xc4 ♗xc4 18 0-0 ♗ce5 19 ♗d5 ♗d3 20 ♜xg4 ♗xc1 21 h5 gave White good compensation for the exchange in K.Severin-A.Matiukov, correspondence 1997.

d) 15...♖fe8!? 16 h5 (16 0-0!? looks funny; then 16...♙xh3 17 gxh3 ♖e6 18 ♜e3 ♗c6 19 ♖b1 ♜a3 20 ♖xb7 ♗d4 is unclear) 16...♙xh3 (after 16...♗xh5 Petursson gives 17 ♗d1 intending ♗g5 or ♗f4, but Black could try 17...♜b4+ with the idea of ...♙xh3 or ...♙g4) 17

hxg6 ♗xg6 18 ♖xh3 ♗xe4 19 ♖b1 ♜c2 was P.Lukacs-L.Hazai, Vrnjacka Banja 1988, and here Petursson points out that 20 ♖xb7! would favour White.

e) 15...♙xc4!? 16 ♙xc4 ♗xc4 17 0-0 (after 17 h5? ♗g4 18 ♜f4 Black has 18...♗ge3!) 17...♗e5 (not 17...♖fe8 18 h5! ♗xh5 19 ♗g5 ♗f6 20 ♗d5 ♗d2 21 ♖c3 1-0 L.Volf-J.Petro, correspondence 1989) 18 h5 (after 18 ♗d5 ♗xd5 19 exd5 ♗g4 20 ♜f4 ♗f6 21 ♜xd6 b6! White cannot chase the black queen because of 22 ♖b1?! ♜d4 23 ♖fd1 ♜xh4) 18...♗fg4 19 ♜g5 (19 ♜f4!?) 19...f6 20 ♜h4 g5 21 ♜g3 ♖a3 22 f4 gxf4 23 ♜xf4 c4 24 ♗d5 ♜c5+ 25 ♗h1 ♖ae8 was unclear in T.Habermehl-H.Bellmann, correspondence 1997.

Returning to Black's most active try, 15...b5:



16 cxb5

Instead 16 h5 may be best. It seems to lead to a draw with best play:

a) 16...♗fg4 17 ♜d2 ♜xd2+ 18 ♗xd2 ♗xc4+ 19 ♗e1 a6 20 hxg6 fxg6 21 ♗g5 looks better for White.

b) 16...♙xc4 17 hxg6 fxg6 18 ♗g5!

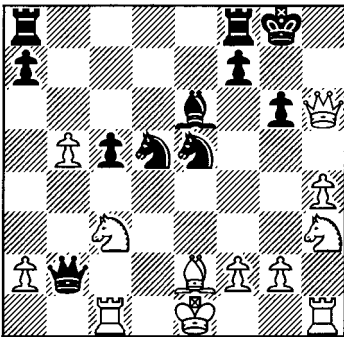
♖xc1+ 19 ♘d1 ♖xg5 20 ♖xg5 ♙xe2 21 ♙xe2 ♘xe4 22 ♖h6 ♙f7 23 ♖h7+ ♙e6 24 ♖b7 d5 25 ♖h7 ♖ae8 26 f3 ♘g3+ 27 ♙f2 ♘e4+ 28 ♙g1 favours White according to Bellmann, who has often played this line in correspondence games for both sides.

c) 16...♘eg4 17 ♖g5 b4 18 ♘d1 ♖d4 19 ♘f4 ♘xe4 20 ♘xe6 fxe6 21 ♖xg4 ♖d2+ 22 ♙f1 ♘xf2 23 ♘xf2 ♖xc1+ 24 ♙d1 ♖f5 25 ♖h3 ♖af8 (worse is 25...g5 26 ♖f3 ♖af8 27 ♖e4 ♖xf3 28 gxf3 ♖f6 29 ♙g2 ♖d2 30 ♙e2 a5 31 ♘g4 when White was much better in H.Bellmann-J.Krebs, correspondence 1999) 26 ♖xg6+ was drawn here in H.Bellmann-G.Von Rein, correspondence 2006. Bellmann gives 26...♙h8 27 ♖f3 ♖xf3 28 gxf3 ♖xc4+ with a likely perpetual check.

16...d5

Black's pawn sacrifice was really just a preparation for this logical strike in the centre. This certainly looks best. Instead 16...♖b4? 17 ♘g5 d5 18 h5 ♖fe8 19 f4 ♖b2 20 0-0! 1-0 was G.Kallai-N.Friedrich, Wiesbaden 1990.

17 exd5 ♘xd5



18 ♘e4

White has tried a few things here, but practice has shown that Black has sufficient resources:

a) 18 ♖d2 ♖xd2+ 19 ♙xd2 ♖ad8 gave Black good play in F.Hoegerl-A.Kondziela, correspondence 2008.

b) 18 ♘d1 ♖b4+ 19 ♙f1? (19 ♖d2 is safer, but 19...♖xh4 still looks promising for Black) 19...♙g4 20 f3 ♙xh3 21 ♖xh3 ♖fe8 22 ♖g3 ♖ad8 23 h5 ♘f4 and Black's central play was the more serious in Fiore-E.Genovese, correspondence 1993.

c) 18 ♘xd5 ♙xd5 19 0-0!? ♖xe2 20 ♘f4 (or 20 ♘g5 when 20...♖e8 21 ♖h7+ ♙f8 22 ♖h6+ ♙g8 is a draw, but Black could try 20...♖h5!?) 20...♖xa2 21 ♖ce1 ♖fe8 22 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 23 ♘xg6 ffg6 24 ♖xg6+ ♙f8 25 ♖f6+ ♙f7 26 ♖xe5 ♖e6 ½-½ V.Baklanov-D.Rook, correspondence 2003.

18...♖fe8

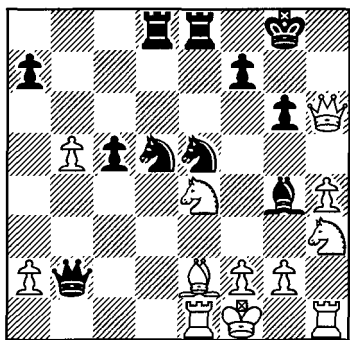
Black maintains the tension. He can also initiate an immediate slugfest with 18...♖b4+ 19 ♙f1 ♙xh3 20 ♘g5 ♙xg2+ 21 ♙xg2 ♘f6, after which 22 h5 ♘eg4 23 ♙xg4 ♖xg4+ 24 ♙f1 ♖ad8 25 hxg6 ♖d1+ 26 ♖xd1 ♖xd1+ 27 ♙g2 ♖g4+ 28 ♙f1 ♖d1+ 29 ♙g2 ♖g4+ was drawn in G.Kaidanov-F.Fiorito, Buenos Aires 2003.

19 ♙f1

Perhaps White should look to bail out with 19 ♖d2, although Black has good compensation for the pawn after 19...♖xd2+ 20 ♙xd2 ♖ad8.

19...♖ad8 20 ♖e1 ♙g4

Black's beautifully-centralized pieces give him excellent play.



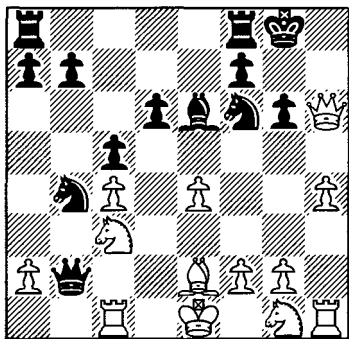
21 g3 ♙xh3+ **22** ♖xh3 ♜d4 **23 h5**

After 23 ♗g5 ♘f6 White's position is a shambles.

23... ♜xe4 **24 hxg6 fxg6** **25** ♜h7+ ♙f8 **26** ♖h4 ♜f5 **27** ♜xa7 ♘f7

Here Black's extra piece was worth more than the pawns in W.Mann-A.Kondziela, correspondence 2008.

B12) 14... ♗b4



This was Petursson's recommendation.

15 ♜d2

Petursson describes this as a "miserable retreat". Most of the alternatives are even worse, but White does have

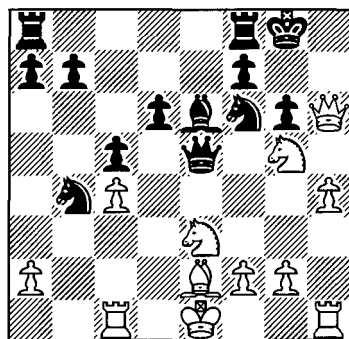
one odd-looking try that is difficult to evaluate:

a) 15 h5? ♗g4 16 ♜f4 (also losing are 16 ♙xg4 ♗d3+ and 16 ♜d2 ♜xd2+ 17 ♙xd2 ♗xf2) 16... ♗xf2! wins for Black.

b) 15 f3 ♗d3+ 16 ♙xd3 ♜xg2, as given by Petursson, is winning for Black.

c) 15 ♗h3 ♗c2+ 16 ♙d1 ♜xc3 17 ♖xc2 ♜a1+ 18 ♖c1 ♜d4+ is much better for Black.

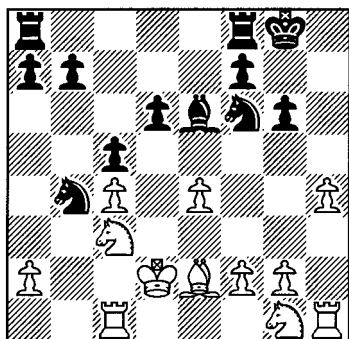
d) 15 ♗d1!? is a strange, rather desperate-looking move. However, matters are not so clear: 15... ♜d4! 16 ♗f3 (instead 16 h5 ♗g4 17 ♗g5 ♜xe4 18 hxg6 ♜xg6 19 ♜d2 was C.Horvath-Y.Zimmerman, Hungarian League 1997, and here 19... ♖ae8 looks good for Black) 16... ♜xe4 17 ♗g5 ♜e5!? (instead 17... ♗d3+ 18 ♙f1 ♜f4 19 ♖c2 ♙g4 20 g3 ♜f5 21 ♙xg4 ♜xg4 22 ♗e3 ♜h5 23 ♜xh5 gxh5 24 ♙g2 d5 25 cxd5 was drawn here in V.Boreisis-G.Almer, correspondence 2007; 25...b5 would be dynamically balanced) 18 ♗e3 is quite murky.



That said, after 18... ♜b2! (instead 18... ♖fe8 19 h5 ♗xh5 20 a3 ♜b2 21 0-0

was unclear in A.Khalifman-V.Babula, German League 2001, and here Golubev suggests 21...♖xe2 19 ♖d1 ♜ae8! (after 19...♜fe8 20 h5 ♙xc4 Golubev points out that 21 0-0! ♜xe2 22 hxg6 ♜h5 23 gxf7+ ♙xf7 24 ♜xf6 is good for White) 20 h5 (or 20 ♖f1 ♙f5! 21 h5 ♜xe3 22 fxe3 ♙d3! – Golubev) 20...♙xc4! 21 ♙xc4 (probably better is 21 0-0, but Black has no problems after 21...♜xe2 22 hxg6 ♜h5 23 ♜xh5 ♙xh5 24 ♙xc4 fxg6) 21...♜xe3+! 22 ♖f1 (22 fxe3? ♜c3+ wins for Black) 22...♜xf2+! 23 ♖xf2 ♙g4+ 24 ♖g1 ♙xh6 25 hxg6 ♖g7! if anyone is better, it's Black.

15...♜xd2+ 16 ♖xd2



16...♙c6!?

It turns out that allowing ♙b5 is not so dangerous, so Black avoids weakening himself on the b-file and recentralizes his knight. Black has also tried 16...a6: 17 ♜b1 ♜ab8 18 ♙f3 b5 19 a3 bxc4! 20 ♙g5 ♙d3 21 ♙xd3 cxd3 22 ♖xd3 ♙g4 23 ♖e2 ♙c4+ 24 ♖f3 ♙e5+ 25 ♖e3 was A.Raetsky-C.Troyke, Cuxhaven 1993, and now both 25...f6 and 25...♙b3 look slightly better for Black.

17 f3

White covers the g4-square and protects the e4-pawn in preparation for ♙b5, but this weakens some new squares. Bad is 17 h5 gxh5 18 ♙xh5 ♙xc4, while 17 ♙d3 can be met by 17...♙e5 or 17...♙g4 with a good position.

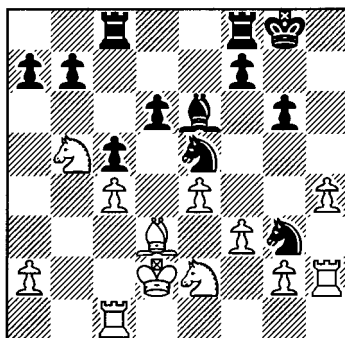
17...♙h5! 18 ♙b5 ♙g3 19 ♜h2 ♜ac8!?

The d-pawn is poisoned, so Black covers the c7-square.

20 ♙d3

Not 20 ♙xd6? ♜cd8.

20...♙e5 21 ♙e2



21...♙xc4+!?

A radical idea. Black will win the exchange in a peculiar way, but his knight will be semi-trapped. It is also possible to play 21...a6! 22 ♙a3 (Black also has the initiative after 22 ♙xg3 axb5 23 cxb5 ♜a8 24 ♜c2 ♜a3 25 ♙e2 ♜fa8) 22...♙xd3 23 ♖xd3 ♙xe2 24 ♖xe2 f5 with some initiative.

22 ♙xc4

Not 22 ♜xc4 ♙f1+.

22...♙xc4 23 ♜xc4

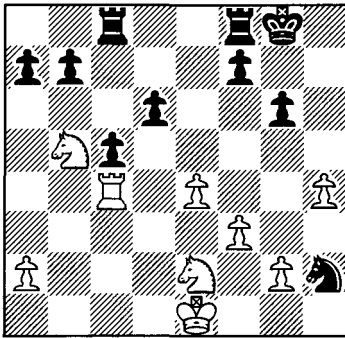
Black is much better after 23 ♙xg3

♙xb5 24 ♖g7 25 ♖h6+ ♖h7, but White could try 23 ♖xa7 ♙xe2 24 ♖xc8 ♜xc8 25 ♜h3 ♖h5 26 ♖xe2 ♖f4+ 27 ♖e3 ♖xh3 28 ♜b1! (28 ♖xh3 b5 gives Black a clear advantage) and now:

a) 28...d5 29 ♖xh3 (if 29 exd5? ♜e8+ and the knight escapes) 29...d4+ 30 ♖d3 ♜a8 is slightly better for Black according to Kramer.

b) 28...♜a8!? is another path to a good rook endgame: 29 ♖xh3 (White is even worse off after 29 ♜xb7 d5! when 30 exd5 again loses to 30...♜e8+ and 30 ♖xh3 d4+ 31 ♖d3 ♜xa2 favours Black) 29...♜xa2 30 ♜xb7 ♜a6 31 ♜d7 ♖g7 and Black has some chances.

23...♖f1+ 24 ♖e1 ♖xh2



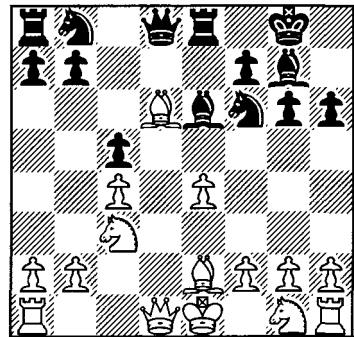
Black is up the exchange and a pawn. Even if White manages to catch the h2-knight, Black has good chances. Kramer gives White's best chance to survive as 25 ♖xd6 ♜c7 26 ♖b5 ♜c6 27 ♖xa7 ♜a6 28 ♖b5 ♜xa2 29 ♜xc5 ♜d8 when Black is only a little better. Instead after 25 ♖f2? ♜fd8! it proved too difficult to contain Black's pawns: 26 ♖f4 a6 27 ♖a3 ♜e8 28 ♖d5 ♖g7 29 ♖e3 b5 30

♜c1 f5 31 exf5 ♜e5! 32 fxg6 d5 33 ♖ac2 ♜d8 34 g4 d4 35 ♖f5+ ♖xg6 36 ♖g3 ♜e2 37 h5+ ♖f7 38 h6 ♖g6 39 ♖cxd4 cxd4 40 ♜c7 d3 41 h7 ♜c2 42 ♜g7+ ♖f6 43 ♖f4 ♜d4+ 44 ♖xd4 ♖xg7 0-1 M.Breazu-S.Kramer, correspondence 1999. White never managed to round up Black's wayward knight.

B2) 10 ♙xd6

This is the natural continuation and is more consistent with White's choice of 8th move. He simply takes the pawn.

10...♜e8



Now White has to decide how hungry he is feeling. 11 ♖f3 is almost always played, but I will also pay special attention to the tricky 11 ♙xc5 as recommended by Flear in *Dangerous Weapons: The King's Indian*. We examine:

B21: 11 ♙xc5

B22: 11 ♖f3

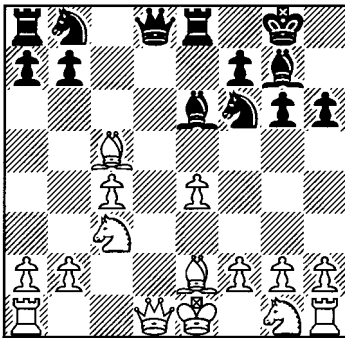
Other moves are justifiably rare:

a) 11 ♙xb8 ♜xb8 (11...♜xb8!?) 12

♖xd8 ♜bxd8 gives Black good compensation. He is well ahead in development and could continue with ...♗d7 followed by ...♗e5 or ...♗b6.

b) 11 e5 is a typical advance, but here it is poorly timed: 11...♗fd7 12 f4 (12 ♗f3 ♗c6 just wins back the pawn with a good position for Black) 12...g5! 13 ♖d2 gxf4 14 ♗xf4 ♗c6 15 ♗f3 ♗dxe5! 16 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 17 ♗xe5 ♖d4! 18 ♖xd4 (18 ♗d3 ♖xc4 19 0-0-0 ♖xd3 20 ♖xd4 cxd4 21 ♖xd3 dxc3 leaves Black a pawn up) 18...cxd4 and Black wins back the piece with an excellent position.

B21) 11 ♖xc5



This greedy capture has hardly been mentioned, let alone played. Still, it is obviously critical. White is now two pawns up! Nevertheless, I believe Black has good chances here and it is not without reason that White almost always plays Line B22 instead.

11...♖a5

This move has to be correct. Black attacks the c5-bishop and threatens ...♗xe4. Instead after 11...♖c8 12 ♖e3

♖xc4 13 ♖c1 ♖e6 14 ♖xc4 ♖xc4 15 f3 ♗c6 16 ♗ge2 (Flear) White is much better. Black has regained part of his investment, but has nothing to show for his pawn deficit.

12 b4

There is not much else. 12 ♖d4 ♗c6 gives Black too many threats.

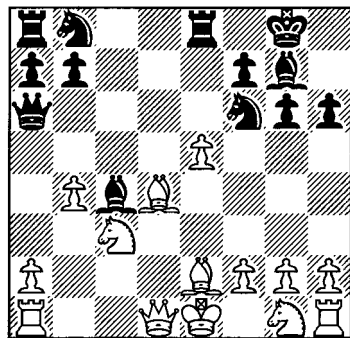
12...♖a6

Flear also analyses 12...♖a3?! 13 ♗b5!, but I think Black should stay away from this.

13 ♖d4

Bad is 13 b5? ♖a5, while after 13 ♗b5 ♗xe4! 14 ♗c7 ♖c6 (14...♖c3+ 15 ♖f1 ♗d2+ 16 ♖xd2 ♖xd2 17 ♗xa6 ♗xa6 also looks good for Black) 15 ♗xe8 ♖c3+ 16 ♖f1 ♗d2+ 17 ♖e1 Black can take a draw or try 17...♗xc4+ (instead Ivkov gives 17...♖xg2, but then 18 ♖c1! ♗e4+ 19 ♖xc3 ♗xc3 20 ♗f6+ ♖g7 21 ♖f3 favours White) 18 ♖f1 ♗d2+ 19 ♖e1 ♗e4+ 20 ♖f1 ♗a6!?

13...♖xc4 14 e5



A critical position.

14...♖c6!

Instead Flear points out that

14...♙xe2 15 ♖gxe2 ♗g4 16 b5 ♜e6 17 f4 left White a pawn to the good in J.Ehrnrooth-V.Harjunpaae, correspondence 1988. Also 14...♗fd7 (given an exclaim by Flear) 15 f4 f6 16 ♗d5 ♜c6 17 ♗e3 ♙xe2 18 ♗xe2 fxe5 19 fxe5 ♙xe5 20 0-0 was J.Ehrnrooth-H.Sarink, correspondence 1995, when Flear correctly observes that despite the fact that Black has regained his pawns, White is much better because of his better development and safer king.

Black does have a decent alternative though in 14...♗h5!? 15 b5 (after 15 ♙xh5 ♗c6! White is facing too many threats with his king stuck in the centre) 15...♜e6 16 ♙xh5 gxh5 17 ♗ge2 (rushing to develop; instead 17 f4 allows Black to open the position with 17...a6! when he will get c6 for his knight) 17...♙xe5 18 0-0 ♗d7 19 ♜e1 ♜ad8 with a very active position in return for the shattered structure.

15 exf6

This is critical, but very risky. Instead 15 ♗f3 ♙xe2 16 ♜xe2 ♗g4 17 h3 (or 17 0-0 ♗d7 winning back the pawn with equality) 17...♗xe5 18 ♗xe5 and now Black should avoid 18...♜xg2?! 19 0-0-0 ♜g5+ 20 ♜e3 ♜xe3+ 21 fxe3 ♙xe5 22 ♙xe5 ♜xe5 23 ♜d8+, and simply play 18...♙xe5 19 ♙xe5 ♗d7 20 0-0 (not 20 f4? ♗xe5 and the c3-knight is hanging) 20...♗xe5 when he is at least equal.

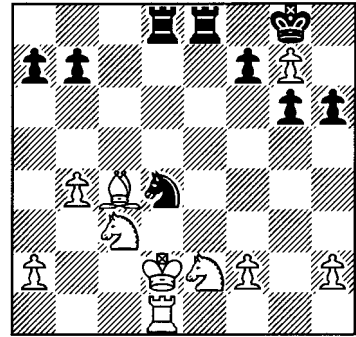
15...♜xg2 16 fxg7

After 16 ♗d2 Black should avoid 16...♜xh1? 17 ♙xc4! when ♜g4 is a big threat, and instead play 16...♗c6! in-

tending ...♜ad8 when White is in trouble.

16...♜xh1 17 ♗f1

Or 17 ♗d2 ♗c6! 18 ♙xc4 ♗xd4 19 ♗ge2 ♜xd1+ 20 ♜xd1 ♜ad8 with beautiful centralization.



White has big problems here: for example, 21 ♗xd4 ♜xd4+ 22 ♙d3 ♜xb4, 21 ♙d3 ♗f3+ 22 ♗c1 ♗xh2 or 21 ♗c1 ♗xe2+ 22 ♙xe2 ♜c8 23 ♗b2 ♜xc3 24 ♗xc3 ♜xe2. In all three cases Black has a clear advantage in the ending.

17...♙xe2+ 18 ♗cxe2 ♗c6 19 ♙f6 ♜xh2 20 ♗g3

Black also has a good position after the alternative 20 b5 ♜e6! 21 ♙c3 ♜d8 22 ♜c2 ♗e7.

20...♜e6

Black continues to play in the centre. 20...♗xb4 is also possible.

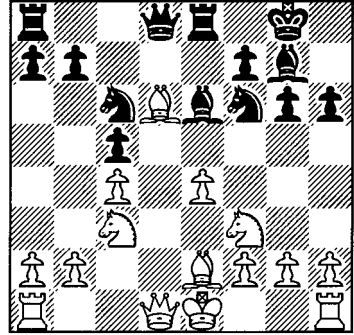
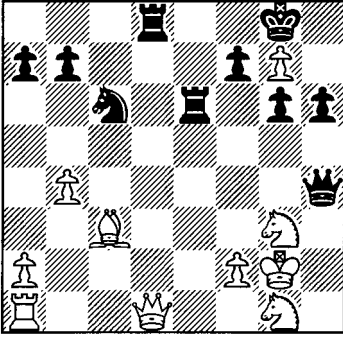
21 ♙c3

If 21 ♜f3 ♜ae8 intending ...♗e5 with counterplay.

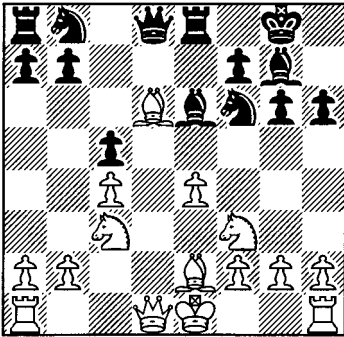
21...♜h4 22 ♗g2 ♜d8

Black intends ...♗d4. The position is unclear, but I prefer Black, who is the better coordinated.

B221) 11...♖c6



B22) 11 ♖f3



This is the main line. White is satisfied with his extra pawn and hurries to complete his development. Black has two important moves here:

B221: 11...♖c6

B222: 11...♗b6

The first of these is the traditional main line, but it has been pretty well worked out and leads to an ending that is not very fun for Black. The second line has proven to be quite sound and has been Black's more common choice of late.

This is very natural, but the main line leads to an ending where Black is down a pawn. I decided to cover it anyway, however, because the deviations along the way are instructive and this line could prove to be a good theoretical solution if Black can indeed achieve an easy draw. Special attention should be paid to Black's 19th move, as the road to equality there may prove to be simpler than in the main line.

12 0-0 ♖d4

Black must force the pace. Instead 12...♗b6? fails to 13 ♖a4, while 12...♗a5 does not hold up too well after 13 ♖d2 ♖ed8 14 ♔f4! (better than 14 ♖b3 ♗b6 15 ♖a4 ♗b4 16 ♖bxc5 ♔xc4 17 ♔xc4 ♗xc4 18 ♖xb7 ♖xe4 19 ♖c1 ♗b5 20 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 21 ♗c2 ♖d4 22 ♗xe4 ♖e2+ 23 ♖h1 ♖xc1 24 ♖xc1 ♖xd6 when Black was doing well in the well-known game L.Alburt-G.Kasparov, Daugavpils 1978) 14...♖d4 15 ♖d5.

13 e5

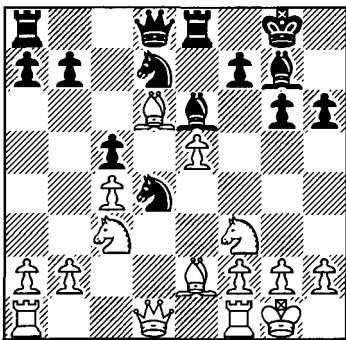
Instead 13 ♔xc5?! ♖xe2+ 14 ♗xe2 ♗c8! wins material, while 13 ♖xd4 cxd4

14 ♖xd4 ♜xe4 15 ♖xe4 ♖xd6 gives Black the initiative after 16 ♖xb7 (16 ♖c2? ♙f5) 16...♙ab8 17 ♖xa7 ♞xb2. The retreat 13 ♙g3 is not so bad, however:

a) 13...♖b6 14 e5 ♜d7 15 ♜xd4 cxd4 16 ♜a4 (16 ♜d5 ♙xd5 17 cxd5 ♜xe5 is comfortable for Black) 16...♖a6 17 f4 f6 (instead 17...♙xc4 18 ♙xc4 ♖xc4 19 b3 looks better for White) 18 exf6 (after 18 c5 ♖c6 19 ♖xd4?! fxe5 20 fxe5 Black has 20...♜xe5! with the idea 21 ♙xe5 ♙xe5 22 ♖xe5 ♙d5, but White could try 19 ♙f3!?) 18...♜xf6 19 ♞c1 ♙f5 20 ♙f3 ♞ac8 21 b3 ♜e4 gave Black compensation for the pawn in T.Tukmakov-J.Mestel, Plovdiv 1983.

b) 13...♙g4 is untried, but looks simplest: 14 e5 (14 ♜xd4 cxd4 15 ♙xg4?! dxc3 favours Black) 14...♜h5 15 ♜xd4 cxd4 16 ♙xg4 ♜xg3 17 hxg3 dxc3 18 ♖xd8 (18 bxc3 ♞xe5 is also fine for Black) 18...♞axd8 19 f4 f6 with equality.

13...♜d7

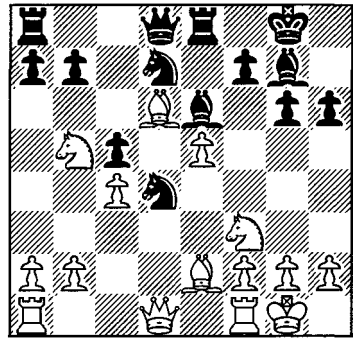


14 ♜xd4

White has a couple of other tries here, but they do not look too dangerous:

a) 14 ♞e1 ♜c6 15 ♜e4 (15 ♜d5 ♞c8 16 ♖b3 ♜dxe5 gives Black good play after either 17 ♙xe5 ♜xe5 18 ♖xb7?! ♞b8 19 ♖xa7 ♙xd5 20 cxd5 ♞xb2 or 17 ♙xc5 ♜xf3+ 18 ♙xf3 b6 with the idea of ...♜a5) 15...b6 (or 15...♜dxe5 with counterplay against the c4-pawn) 16 ♙f1 was W.Uhlmann-A.Adorjan, Amsterdam 1971. Now the simple 16...♜dxe5 is pleasant for Black.

b) 14 ♜b5 and now:

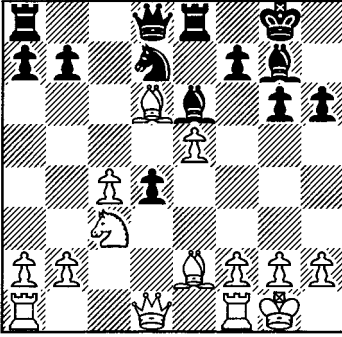


b1) 14...♜xf3+ 15 ♙xf3 ♜xe5 (or 15...♙xc4 16 ♜c7 ♙f1 17 ♜xf1 ♜xe5 18 ♙xb7 ♞b8 19 ♜xe8 ♞xb7 20 ♜xg7 ♞d7 and Black won back the piece with a level position in I.Farago-O.De la Riva Aguado, Benasque 1993) 16 ♙xb7 ♞b8 17 ♙xb8 ♖xb8 18 ♙d5 ♜xc4 19 ♙xc4 ♙xc4 20 ♜d6 ♙e2 21 ♞e1 ♖xb2 22 ♖d5 ♞e6 was I.Farago-G.Van Laatum, Dieren 1990. Here White should try 23 ♙ab1 ♖d4 24 ♖a8+ ♜h7 25 ♜xf7 when the position is unclear according to Farago.

b2) 14...♜xb5 15 cxb5 and now instead of 15...♙g4? 16 ♞e1! ♖b6 (F.Visier Segovia-H.Ree, Las Palmas 1973) when 17 ♙c4! is strong, Black could play

15...♙f5 with the idea of ...♗xe5.

14...cxd4



15 ♗xd4

Instead 15 ♗b5 is not dangerous, in view of 15...♗xe5 16 c5 d3 (also possible is 16...♗c4 17 ♗c7 ♗xd6 18 cxd6 ♗xd6 19 ♗xa8 ♖xa8 with compensation in P.Lukacs-E.Brondum, Montana Crans 1976, but the text move is more ambitious) 17 ♙xd3 ♖c8 (not 17...♗xd3 18 ♗xd3 ♖c8 19 ♖ad1 ♗a5 because White had the shot 20 ♙c7! in W.Uhlmann-M.Damjanovic, Cienfuegos 1973, with the idea 20...♖xc7 21 b4) 18 ♙e2 ♗c4 and now:

a) 19 b3 ♗b2! 20 ♗c1 (20 ♗d2? ♖xc5) 20...♙d7! hits the e2-bishop. After 21 ♗c3 (or 21 ♖e1 ♖xe2 22 ♖xe2 ♗d3 21 ♗d2 ♙f5! with the idea of ...♖xc5) 21...♗a5! 22 b4 ♗xb4 23 ♗d5 ♗d4 Black has the upper hand.

b) 19 ♖c1 ♗xb2 20 ♗d2 ♙d7 (or 20...a6 21 ♗d4 ♙d5 22 ♗xb2 ♗g5 23 g3 ♙xd4 24 ♗xd4 ♖xe2 with an equal position) 21 ♖c2 was C.Horvath-P.Spiriev, Budapest 1991. Now Petursson pointed out that 21...a6! throws White off bal-

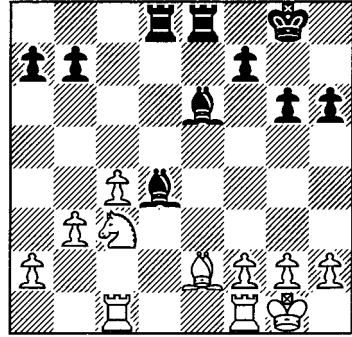
ance: for example, 22 ♗a7 (both 22 ♗a3 and 22 ♗c3 are well met by 22...♗a4) 22...♖a8 23 c6 ♖xa7 24 cxd7 ♗xd7 when Black has an extra pawn.

After the text, the next several moves are forced:

15...♗xe5 16 ♙xe5 ♗xd4 17 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 18 ♖ac1 ♖ad8

Worse is 18...♖ac8 19 b3 a6 20 ♙f3 b5 because of 21 ♙b7!

19 b3



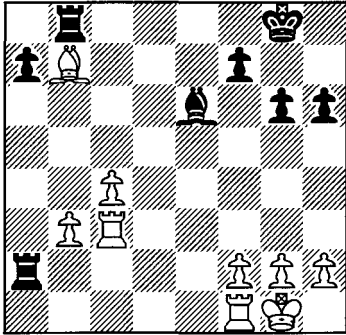
19...♙xc3

Black gives up his bishop with hopes to liquidate the queenside. This is the accepted procedure, but I would be tempted to play 19...♙e5!? 20 ♙f3 ♖d3: for example, 21 ♗b1!? (after 21 ♗b5?! a6 White experiences some difficulties, while both 21 ♗d5 ♖d2 and 21 ♗e4 b6 should give Black sufficient compensation for the pawn) 21...b6 22 ♖cd1 ♖ed8 (22...♙f5!?) 23 ♙d5! (23 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 24 ♖d1 ♙f5 gives Black good play) 23...♖xd1 24 ♖xd1 b5 25 ♗d2 ♙xd5 26 ♗f1 ♖d7! 27 cxd5 ♗f8 and Black has good chances to hold.

20 ♖xc3 ♖d2 21 ♙f3 ♖xa2

Worse is 21...b6 22 a4. Black wants to exchange pawns.

22 ♖xb7 ♜b8



Black hopes that his active pieces combined with the possibility of ...a5-a4 will allow him to liquidate into a drawn ending. Adorjan once claimed that Black had a clear route to a draw in this end-game, but I have not found it!

23 ♖f3

This is not the commonest move, but I think it causes Black the most problems. Instead 23 ♖c6 ♜a3 is not so dangerous after either 24 ♖b5 a6 25 ♖a4 ♜b4 26 ♜cc1 ♖xc4 27 bxc4 ♜axa4 28 c5 ♜b7 or 24 ♖a4 ♜b4 25 ♜fc1 ♖xc4 26 ♜xc4 ♜xc4 27 bxc4 ♜xa4 28 c5 ♜e4 (Petursson).

White does have an important alternative in 23 ♖e4, which has actually been played more frequently and with greater success than 23 ♖f3. After 23...♜a3 24 ♖c2 a5 White has:

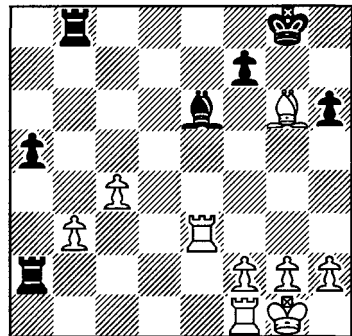
a) 25 f4 a4 26 f5 and now:

a1) 26...gxf5 27 ♖g3+ ♖f8 28 bxa4 ♜xg3 29 hxg3 ♜b2 30 ♖xf5 with a clear advantage in W.Uhlmann-A.Sznapiak,

Zinnowitz 1981, as after 30...♖xc4 31 ♜a1 ♖d5 White has 32 ♖h3.

a2) 26...♖xf5 should hold: 27 ♖xf5 gxf5 28 ♖g3+ ♖f8 29 bxa4 ♜xa4 30 ♜c3 ♜b2 31 ♜xf5 ♜aa2 32 ♖g3 ♜c2 33 ♖g4 (or 33 h3 ♖xc4 34 ♜f6 h5 35 ♜h6 h4 36 ♖g4 1/2-1/2 W.Uhlmann-W.Schmidt, East Germany 1981) 33...h5 34 ♖g5 ♖e7 (also possible is Petursson's suggestion 34...♜a1+ 35 ♜f1 ♜xf1+ 36 ♖xf1 ♖xc4 37 ♜xh5 ♜c2) 35 h3 f6 36 ♖g6 ♖xc4 37 ♖gxf6 ♜a1+ 38 ♖h2 h4 39 ♜h6 ♜aa4 40 ♜ff6 ♜e4 1/2-1/2 W.Sapis-M.Jasinski, correspondence 1995.

b) 25 ♜e3 ♜a2 (after 25...♖g7 both 26 h3 and 26 ♜c1 have scored well for White) 26 ♖xg6 (White should not get careless, because both 26 ♜c1? ♖xc4! with the idea 27 bxc4? ♜xc2 and 26 ♖d1? a4 27 bxa4 ♖xc4 28 ♜fe1 ♜b1 lead him into difficulties) and now:

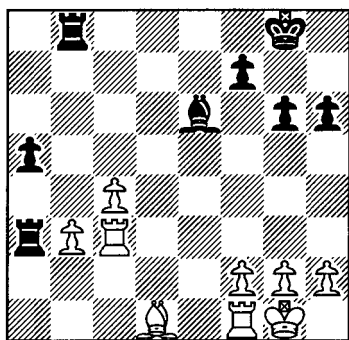


b1) 26...♜b2 27 ♜b1! (Black's idea was illustrated after 27 ♖e4 ♜8xb3 28 ♜a1 ♖xc4 29 ♜xb3 ♖xb3 30 ♜xa5 ♜a2 31 ♜xa2 ♖xa2 32 f4 f6 33 ♖f2 ♖f7 with a draw in E.Bareev-V.Akopian, Moscow 1989) 27...♜xb1+ 28 ♖xb1 ♖xc4 29 ♖c2

♙e6 30 ♖c3 and White has consolidated his extra pawn.

b2) 26...a4 27 bxa4 ♙xc4 28 ♙b1 (similar is 28 ♙d3 ♙xd3 29 ♖xd3 ♖xa4) 28...♖ab2 29 ♙d3 ♙xd3 30 ♖xd3 ♖a2 31 g3 ♖xa4 32 ♖e1 was E.Bareev-W.Watson, Sochi 1988. This should be a draw, but with all four rooks on the board, the defence is not trivial and in fact Watson failed to hold.

23...♖a3 24 ♙d1 a5

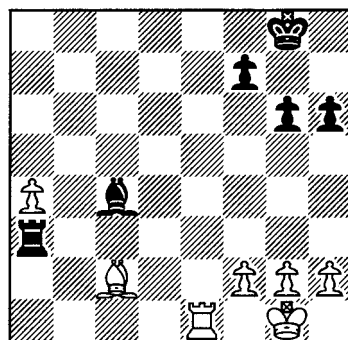


Black has held this position more often than not, but I am not convinced the defence is so simple:

a) 25 ♖e3 ♖b4 (both 25...♙f8 and 25...♖a2 have been tried, while 25...a4 26 bxa4 ♖xe3 27 fxe3 ♙xc4 28 ♖f4 ♖b1 29 ♖xc4 ♙xd1+ 30 ♙f2 allowed White to keep pressing and he eventually prevailed in D.Barlov-C.Ramayrat, New York 1986) 26 h3 (instead 26 ♖fe1 ♖a1 27 ♙c2 ♖a2 28 ♙xg6 ♖b2 is given by Petursson, but as in variation 'b1' above, 29 ♖b1! gives Black some problems) 26...♖a1 27 ♙c2 (White would be the one trying to hold after 27 ♙g4? ♖xf1+ 28 ♙xf1 ♖xb3 or 27 ♖fe1?! a4 28 bxa4

♖bb1 29 ♖d3 ♙xc4 30 ♖d8+ ♙g7 31 ♙h2 ♙b3 32 ♙xb3 ♖xe1 33 ♖d7) 27...♖a2 28 ♖c3 (here too 28 ♙xg6 ♖b2 29 ♖b1 is a better try) 28...♖a3! draws easily and is better than 28...a4 29 bxa4 ♖xc4 30 ♖xc4 ♙xc4 31 ♖c1 ♙e6.

b) 25 ♖c1 ♖c8 26 ♖e1 a4 27 bxa4 (27 ♖e3 was seen in L.Alburt-V.Ciocaltea, Bucharest 1978, and here Petursson points out that 27...♖a2! 28 bxa4 ♖xc4 29 ♖b1 ♖d4 gives Black enough activity to hold the balance) 27...♙xc4 28 ♖xc4 ♙xc4 29 ♙c2 (29 f3 ♙f8 30 ♙f2 ♖a2+ 31 ♙g3 ♖a1 32 ♙f2 ♖a2+ 33 ♙g3 1/2-1/2 was L.Oil-M.Saltaev, Tashkent 1986) and now:



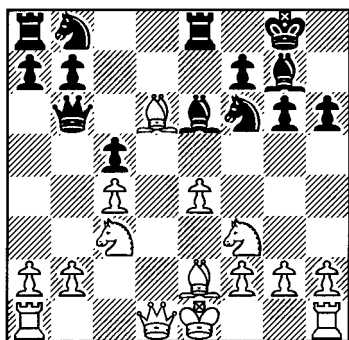
b1) 29...♙d5 30 h3! (White's h-pawn proved vulnerable after 30 h4 ♙c6 31 ♖d1 ♖a2 32 ♙b3 ♖a3 33 ♖d6 ♖xb3 34 ♖xc6 ♖b1+ 35 ♙h2 ♖b4 with a draw in L.Polugaevsky-G.Kasparov, Bugojno 1982) 30...♙c6 31 ♖d1 ♙f8 32 ♖d6 ♖c3 33 ♙d1 ♖c1 34 ♙h2 ♙e7 35 ♖d4 and White had consolidated his extra pawn in Glotz-O.Dobierzin, correspondence 1990.

b2) Perhaps 29...♖a2!? 30 ♖c1 ♙e6

could be a better try.

Unfortunately this line only shows Black aspiring for half a point if White knows his stuff. Holding this endgame is hardly a trivial matter, but I still believe it is useful to study 11...♖c6. Perhaps 19...♙e5!? is the way forward for Black, from both a theoretical and practical point of view.

B222) 11...♖b6



This is the favoured continuation nowadays. Black makes a thematic move and avoids the suffering of the last line. He threatens 12...♖xb2 and White must also be wary of 12...♗d8, pinning the bishop.

12 ♙xb2

White avoids the pin on the d-file by quickly exchanging his bishop. Trading an active bishop for an undeveloped knight is a concession of sorts, but White hopes to quickly consolidate his extra pawn. Other moves have scored poorly for White:

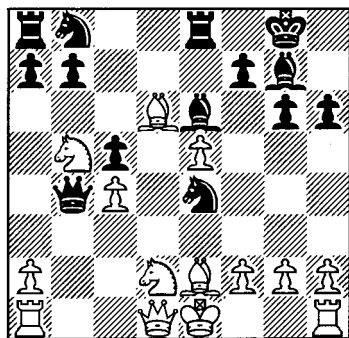
a) 12 ♗d2 ♖c6 (this looks better than 12...♗d8 13 e5 ♖e8 14 ♗d1) 13 0-0 (after

13 ♖a4 ♖xe4! 14 ♖xb6 ♖xd2 15 ♖xa8 ♖xf3+ 16 ♙xf3 ♙xc4+ 17 ♖d2 ♗d8! Black has excellent play) 13...♗e8 intending ...♖e8 looks good for Black, and 14 e4 is met by 14...♖e5!.

b) 12 0-0 ♗d8 13 e5 ♖e8 14 ♖d5 (after 14 ♖e4 ♖xd6 both 15 exd6 f5 and 15 ♖xd6 ♖c6 clearly favour Black) 14...♙xd5 15 ♗xd5 ♖xd6 16 ♗ad1 ♖c6 17 exd6 ♖d4 18 ♖xd4 ♗xd6 19 ♗e4 ♙xd4 20 b3 ♗e6 21 ♗c2 ♗ae8 22 ♙f3 h5 and Black had a slight initiative in A.Aleksandrov-R.Wojtaszek, Warsaw 2009.

c) 12 e5 and now:

c1) 12...♗xb2 13 ♖b5 (13 ♗c1 ♗xc1+ 14 ♗xc1 ♖fd7 is certainly fine for Black) 13...♗b4+ (13...♖e4 is also fine, but 14 ♗b1 ♗xa2 15 ♗a1 ♗b2 16 ♗b1 is just a draw) 14 ♖d2 (14 ♗d2 ♖e4! 15 ♗xb4 cxb4 16 ♖c7?! ♖xd6 17 c5 ♖d7 18 cxd6 ♖xe5 is good for Black, while 14 ♙f1 ♙xc4 15 ♖c7 ♖a6 16 ♖xe8 ♖xe8! is fairly level, but unbalanced) 14...♖e4 and now:



c11) 15 ♗b1 ♗a5 16 ♙c7?! (after this Black starts to gain the upper hand; in-

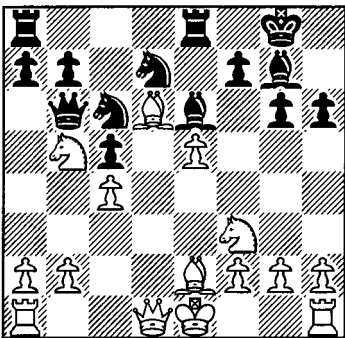
stead 16 ♖c7 ♖c3 is bad, so White should try 16 f3!?) 16...b6 17 ♙d3 (after 17 ♙f3 ♙xc4! 18 ♙xe4 ♙xb5 19 ♙xa8? ♙xe5 the white king is caught in the crossfire) 17...♙f5 and Black was clearly better in M.Kutsykh-M.Golubev, Odessa 2010.

c12) 15 ♖c7 ♖c6 (Black could try to complicate with 15...♙d8!? when 16 ♖xa8 ♖xd2 17 ♙xd2 ♙xd2+ 18 ♙xd2 ♙xe5 is very good, while 16 ♙b1 ♙xd2+ 17 ♙xd2 ♖xd2 is unclear) 16 ♖xa8 ♙xa8 17 ♙b1 has the idea of 17...♙a5 18 ♙b5 ♙c3 19 ♙b3 with a draw.

c2) 12...♖fd7 and now:

c21) 13 0-0 ♖c6 14 ♖a4 ♙a5 15 a3 ♖dx5 16 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 17 b4 cxb4 18 axb4 ♙d8 19 ♙c1 ♖c6! (also good is 19...♖xc4 20 ♙xc4 ♙xc4 21 ♙xc4 and now 21...b5 22 ♙c6 bxa4 23 ♙xa4 ♙e6 is equal, but Black could try for more with 21...♙e6!?) 20 ♖c5 ♙c8 21 ♙f3 ♖d4 22 ♙g3 ♙b6 23 ♖e4 was LAlburt-M.Hebden, Hastings 1983/84, and now 23...♙g4! 24 ♙xg4 ♙xe4 gives Black the initiative.

c22) 13 ♖b5 ♖c6! and here:

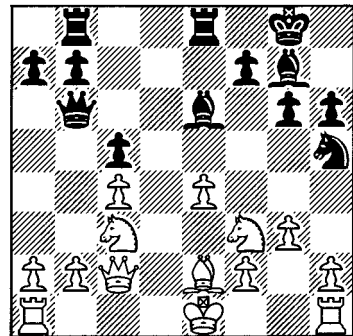


c221) 14 ♙c7 ♙a6 15 0-0 ♙ec8 (Black could also venture 15...♖dx5 16 ♙xe5 ♖xe5 17 ♖c7 ♖xf3+ 18 ♙xf3 ♙xc4 19 ♖xa8 ♙xa8 20 b3 ♙a6 21 ♙c1 ♙xa2 22 ♙xc5 ♙xb3) 16 ♙b3 ♖dx5 17 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 18 ♙xe5 ♙xe5 is level.

c222) 14 ♖c7 ♖dx5 15 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 16 ♖xa8 (safer is 16 ♖xe8 ♙xe8 17 ♙xe5 ♙xe5, although Black will quickly win a pawn and have decent compensation for the exchange) 16...♙b4+ (also possible is 16...♙a5+ 17 ♖f1 ♖xc4! 18 ♖c7 ♙d8 19 ♖xe6 ♙xd6 20 ♙xc4 ♙xd1+ 21 ♙xd1 fxe6) 17 ♖f1 (17 ♙d2 loses to 17...♖d3+! 18 ♙xd3 ♙g4+) 17...♖xc4! and Black has a powerful initiative.

12...♙axb8 13 ♙c2 ♖h5 14 g3

Instead 14 0-0 ♖f4 15 ♙fe1 ♖xe2+ 16 ♙xe2 (if 16 ♙xe2 ♙xc4) 16...♙b4 17 ♖d5 ♙xb2 wins back the pawn, while 14 ♖d2 ♖f4 15 ♙f1 (or 15 ♙f3 ♙xb2!) 15...♙bd8! 16 g3 ♖h3 17 ♙xh3 ♙xh3 18 0-0-0 gives Black good play after 18...♙a5 or even 18...♙xc3!? 19 ♙xc3 ♙a6 with the idea of ...♙d4.



After the text, Black has the bishop-pair and a lead in development, but

White's position is very solid. Black has a difficult decision to make.

14...♗h3!?

This is the most enterprising move, but 14...♗xc3+ has been more popular. White has:

a) 15 bxc3 ♗g4 16 h3 (after 16 ♖d2 ♗xe2 17 ♖xe2 ♗e6 18 f3 ♖bd8 Black had good compensation for the pawn in G.Agzamov-V.Chekhov, Telavi 1982) 16...♗xf3 17 ♗xf3 ♗e6 and now:

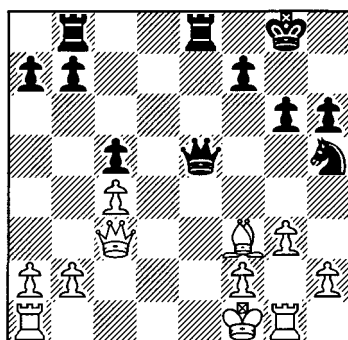
a1) 18 0-0 ♗xh3 19 ♖fe1 ♖f6 is at least equal for Black.

a2) 18 ♖f1 ♖f6 19 ♖e1 ♗xc4+ 20 ♖g2 and now 20...b5 was fine for Black in J.Goriatchkin-I.Kurnosov, Orsk 2001, while 20...♖e5!? may be even better.

a3) 18 0-0-0 b5!? (more aggressive than 18...♗xc4) 19 ♖he1 bxc4 (better than 19...b4, as in A.Yermolinsky-S.Kindermann, Groningen 1997) 20 e5 ♗a6 21 ♖d2 ♖g7 22 ♗d5 ♖ed8 (threatening 23...♖xd5 24 ♖xd5 ♗a3+ and 25...♖b2) 23 ♖d1 ♖e6 24 ♖e4 (24 ♗e4) 24...♖d4! and Black had the upper hand in G.Von Rein-J.Leconte, correspondence 1999.

b) 15 ♗xc3 ♗h3 16 e5 (bad is 16 ♖d2 ♗g2 17 ♖g1 ♗xe4 18 ♗xh5?! ♗f5+! 19 ♗e2 ♗e6 as given by Golubev, while 16 0-0-0 ♖xe4 17 ♗d3 is fine for Black after either 17...♖ee8 or 17...♖e7) 16...♗g2 (Black could also consider the speculative 16...♖bd8!? 17 ♖d2 ♖g7 18 f4 ♖e6 19 ♖f2 ♖d4) 17 ♖g1 ♗xf3 18 ♗xf3 ♗d6! 19 ♖f1 (not 19 ♗xh5 ♖xe5+ 20 ♗e2? ♖be8) 19...♗xe5 (after 19...♖xe5 20 ♖g2 Black could try Golubev's suggestion

20...♖f6!?, because 20...♖g7?! 21 ♖ad1 ♗c7 22 ♖d7! ♗xd7 23 ♗xe5 ♖c8 24 ♖d1 gave White a clear advantage in C.Horvath-A.Stummer, Budapest 1992) reaches an important position for the assessment of 14...♗xc3+.



White has:

b1) 20 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 21 ♖g2 ♖f6 (21...♖g7 is also possible) 22 ♖gd1 ♖e6 23 ♖e1 with a draw in G.Kaidanov-F.Hellers, New York 1993.

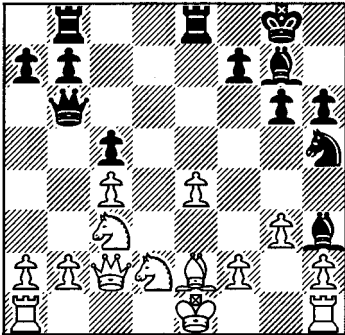
b2) 20 ♗a3!? is much more troubling for Black. This idea was basically unknown before Mikhail Golubev published his game with Bareev in his 2006 book *Understanding the King's Indian*. Black has a few possibilities here:

b21) 20...b6 21 ♖g2 (worse is 21 ♗xa7 ♗xb2 22 ♖g2 ♖f6 with the idea 23 ♖ab1 ♗d4 24 ♖xb6 ♖e4!) 21...a5 22 ♖ge1 ♗f6 23 ♗xh5 gxh5 is drawish, but White can claim a small edge according to Golubev.

b22) 20...♖g7 21 ♖g2 ♖e6 22 ♖ge1 (I would be more concerned with 22 ♗xa7 ♗xb2 23 ♖ge1 when I cannot find anything that is completely satisfactory for

Black) 22...♞f6 23 ♔d5! ♘d4 (queried by Golubev, but I think this is okay) 24 ♞xc5 and here 24...♘c2 25 ♞xe8+ ♞xe8 26 ♞d1 ♞e2 27 ♚f1 ♞xf2+ 28 ♚g1! proved to be good for White in E.Bareev-M.Golubev, Klaipeda 1985. Instead I believe Black can hold with 24...b6! 25 ♞c7 ♘c2 26 ♞xe8+ ♞xe8 27 ♞f1 (Golubev stopped here, considering that White was much better) 27...♞e2 28 ♚g1 ♘b4 29 ♞xa7 ♘xd5 30 cxd5 ♞xb2 when he is active enough to hold the balance.

b23) 20...♘f6 21 ♚g2 (21 ♞xa7 g5! gives Black counterplay) and now 21...b6 22 ♞xa7 ♞xb2 23 ♞ab1 ♞d4 24 ♞ge1 allows White to keep some pressure, such as with 24...♘g4 25 ♔xg4 ♞xg4 26 ♞xb6!. However, 21...a6! looks very solid. **15 ♘d2**



15...♘f6!?

Black avoids ♔xh5 and keeps as much tension as possible. There are some other possibilities:

a) 15...♔d4 16 ♔xh5 gxh5 17 0-0-0 ♞a6 18 ♚b1 ♞ed8 19 f4 was better for White in B.Gelfand-V.Akopian, Vilnius 1988. Black does not have enough play

to compensate for his pawn deficit.

b) 15...f5 really tries to mix it up: 16 ♔xh5 gxh5 17 0-0-0 fxe4 18 ♘dx4 ♔f5 19 f3 was J.Piket-L.Van Wely, Wijk aan Zee 1997. Here Piket gives 19...♞a6 20 ♞d5 (not 20 ♘xc5? ♔xc2 21 ♘xa6 ♔xd1 22 ♘xb8 ♔xf3 23 ♞f1 ♔g4! trapping the white knight, while 20 ♞b3 ♔xc3 21 ♘xc3 ♞e3 gives Black some compensation for the pawn) 20...♔xe4 21 ♘xe4 ♞xa2 as unclear, but this all looks a bit speculative to me.

c) 15...♔xc3!?! looks like another good option for Black: 16 bxc3 (16 ♞xc3 ♔g2 17 ♞g1 ♔xe4 18 0-0-0 ♘f6 is certainly okay) 16...♘f6 17 f3 ♞bd8 gives Black compensation for the pawn. One possibility is 18 ♚f2 ♞c6 19 ♞he1 g5! with counterplay.

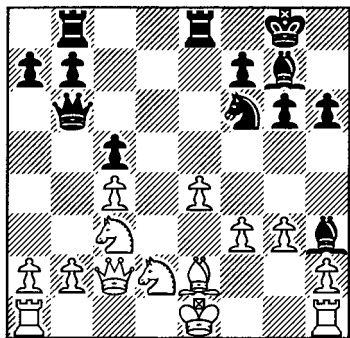
16 f3

This move has not been played before, but Golubev mentioned it as requiring 'serious study'. As this position is potentially critical, I will delve into it a bit. The alternative is 16 0-0-0 ♔g2 17 ♞he1 and now:

a) 17...♔xe4 18 ♘dx4 ♘xe4 19 ♘d5 ♞a5 20 ♔d3 ♘g5 was pleasant for Black in H.Galje-C.Van der Kleij, correspondence 1986.

b) 17...♘xe4! is more forcing: 18 ♘dx4 (18 ♘cx4 ♔xe4 19 ♞b3 ♞a5 also looks good for Black) 18...♔xe4 19 ♘xe4 ♞xe4 and Black clearly holds the initiative.

Black has various possibilities after the text, such as playing ...♞bd8 and ...♘d7-e5.



16...♖c6 17 ♔f2

White prepares to develop his king's rook. Instead 17 0-0-0 would be met with 17...a6 intending ...b5.

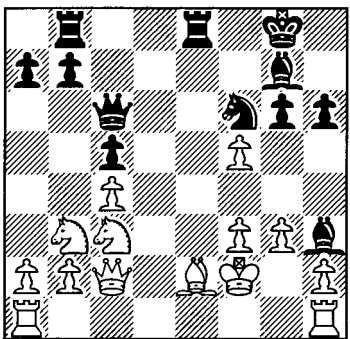
17...♘h7!?

Black threatens ...♗d4+.

18 ♘b3 f5!?

Another idea is 18...♗g5 intending ...♗e6.

19 exf5 ♖f6!



Now the possibility of ...♗g4+ is very dangerous for White.

20 ♗f1

Black has a strong initiative after both 20 fxg6 ♗g4+ 21 ♔g1 ♗xc3 22 bxc3 ♗e3 and 20 ♗he1 ♗g4+ 21 ♔g1

♗e3 22 ♗d2 ♗xf5.

20...♗xf5 21 ♗d3 ♗h3 22 ♗e4

Both 22 ♗f1? and 22 ♗xg6? lose to 22...♗g4+, while after 22 ♗he1 ♗g4+ 23 ♔g1 ♗xe1+ 24 ♗xe1 ♗e5 Black wins material.

22...♗d7

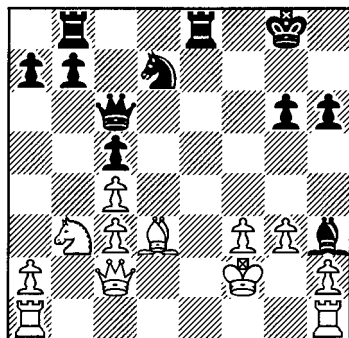
Black could also consider 22...♗f8 or 22...b6.

23 ♗c3 ♗xc3

Instead 23...♗f6 repeats.

24 bxc3

24 ♗xc3 ♖f6 leaves White hard-pressed to deal with ...♗g4+.



24...♗f6

This leads to a draw, although White will have to play accurately. Instead 24...♗e5 25 ♗e4 ♗f6 could be considered.

25 ♗he1 ♗g4+ 26 ♔g1 ♗xf3 27 ♗f1!

Not 27 ♗xg6 ♗xe1+ 28 ♗xe1 ♗f8 with a mating attack and 27 ♗e4 ♗f6 looks very uncomfortable for White.

27...♗xe1 28 ♗xe1 ♗xf1 29 ♗xg6+ ♔h8 30 ♗e8+ ♗xe8 31 ♗xe8+

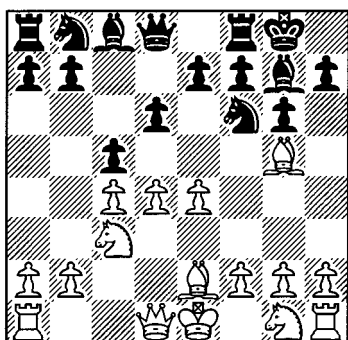
The game is a draw as White has perpetual check.

Chapter 9

Averbakh Variation

Other Lines

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♖c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5
♗e2 0-0 6 ♗g5 c5



In this chapter we look at deviations from the main line for both sides.

A: 7 dxc5

B: 7 d5 b5

C: 7 d5 a6

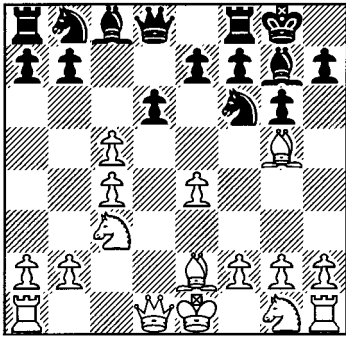
Line A is a positional continuation where White aims for a Maroczy Bind structure. Lines B and C provide Black with systems that are much less theo-

retical than the main lines of the previous chapter. Line B is essentially a Benko Gambit. Every King's Indian player should be familiar with this type of structure, because it is not unusual in the King's Indian for Black to have the opportunity to reach a 'good' Benko. The Averbakh Benko is admittedly quite risky for Black, but many Averbakh players are looking for a strategic game and may feel uncomfortable facing this active line. Theory does not look so kindly on this variation for Black, but there are still some unexplored possibilities and several possible improvements are suggested in the main line and within the notes.

Line C is more positional and is relatively easy to learn. Black feints a Benko and White does best to avoid the gambit this time. Play generally reaches an Averbakh Benoni structure. Here too theory considers White to have some advantage, but I think Black gets decent

play if he knows the correct way to handle the resulting structures.

A) 7 dxc5



With this move White creates a Maroczy structure. We saw this plan in the Four Pawns Attack, but there White's pawn was on f4 and White harboured some attacking ambitions on the king-side. In the Averbakh, this approach leads to quieter play.

7... ♖a5

By threatening ...♗xe4 Black gains time to recapture on c5 with his queen. Instead 7...dxc5 is also playable, but I do not care for the positions that arise after 8 e5 ♗fd7 9 f4 ♗c6 10 ♗f3 f6 or 8 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 9 e5 ♗fd7 10 f4.

8 ♖d2

This is considered best. Perhaps 8 ♗d2 looks more natural, but then 8...dxc5!? (8...♗xc5 9 ♗f3 ♖g4 10 ♗c1 ♗c6 11 ♖e3 ♗a5 is also playable) 9 ♗f3 (if 9 e5?! ♗d8) 9...♗c6 10 0-0 ♖g4 gives Black good play on the dark squares: for example, 11 ♗f4 ♖xf3 12 ♖xf3 ♗d7 13 ♖h6?! ♗de5 14 ♖xg7 ♗xg7 15 ♖e2

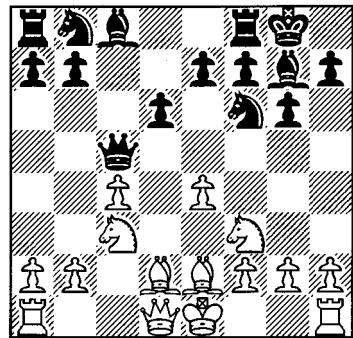
♗b4 16 ♗ab1 e6 17 ♗fc1 ♗ad8 when Black had a nice position and pulled off an upset in Z.Peng-C.Kieffer, Cappelle la Grande 2006.

8... ♗xc5

Again, 8...dxc5 is possible. After 9 e5 (if 9 ♗f3 ♖g4!) 9...♗fd7 10 f4 ♗c6 11 ♗f3 f6 the position is unclear. With the text move, the Maroczy structure is reached. Both sides have lost some time: White with his queen's bishop and Black with his queen.

9 ♗f3

White can also play the slow 9 h3 to prevent ...♖g4, but Black can be satisfied with his position after 9...♖e6 10 b3 ♗c6 or even 9...b6!? 10 ♗f3 ♖b7, taking aim at the e4-pawn.



9... ♖g4

I like to play this move while I can. If Black exchanges bishop for knight it will help him control the dark squares. Also creating an imbalance with the minor pieces gives one a better chance to try to outplay the opponent and White will have to be aware of pressure against the c4-pawn. That said, Black could also

play 9...♖c6 first or even 9...♙e6!?

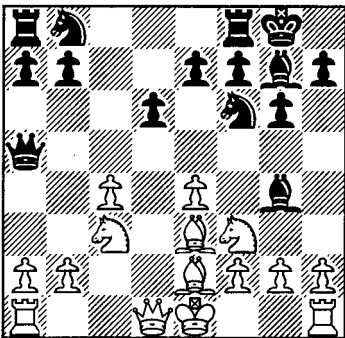
10 ♙e3

White improves the position of his bishop with gain of time and by driving the black queen away from c5, the c4-pawn will not come under pressure. Instead 10 0-0 ♙xf3 (or just 10...♖c6 11 ♙e3 ♗a5 transposing to the main line) 11 ♙xf3 ♖c6 (11...♗xc4? would fail to 12 e5! but now c4 is attacked, so White has to spend a move protecting the pawn) 12 ♙e2 (12 b3 could be met by 12...♖d7 or 12...♖d4) 12...♖d7 and now:

a) 13 ♖c1 a6 14 b3 ♖ac8 15 ♙e3 ♙d4! was fine for Black in M.Fuller-LEvans, Haifa 1976.

b) 13 ♖h1 ♗b6 (not 13...f5? 14 exf5 gxf5 15 ♖d5 with a big advantage in M.Petursson-E.Mortensen, Aarhus 1993) 14 ♖b1 ♗d8 15 ♙e3 ♖c5 was solid enough for Black in S.Kishnev-A.Kuzmin, Moscow 1986.

10...♗a5



11 0-0

White could also play the immediate 11 ♖d2 ♙xe2 12 ♗xe2 when 12...♖c6 will lead to the main line, but Black

could also consider 12...♖fd7!? attacking the c3-knight After 13 ♖c1 Black could play 13...♖c6 when White has committed his rook to c1 rather early or else try the greedy 13...♙xc3!? 14 ♖xc3 ♗xa2.

11...♖c6

Black could also try the immediate 11...♙xf3 12 ♙xf3 ♖c6.

With the text, Black has developed efficiently and White will soon have to make a decision as to what pieces he wants on the board.

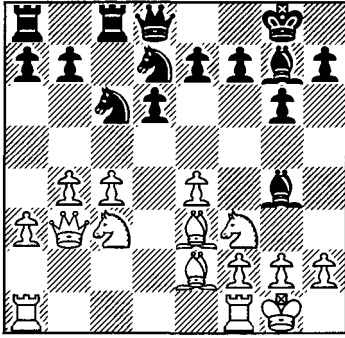
12 ♖d2

Instead 12 h3 makes little sense after 12...♙xf3 13 ♙xf3 ♖d7 because Black will often make this exchange voluntarily. White can, however, maintain the tension a little longer. Some examples:

a) 12 ♖c1 ♖fc8 (other moves such as 12...♙xf3, 12...♖d7 and 12...♖ac8 are possible as well) 13 b3 (13 ♖d2 ♙xe2 will lead to the main line, below) 13...a6 14 a4 ♖ab8 15 ♙d2 ♙xf3 16 ♙xf3 ♖d4 17 ♙e3 ♖xf3+ 18 ♗xf3 ♗b4 19 ♗d1 b5! gave Black good counterplay in V.Ivanov-V.Loginov, St Petersburg 1999.

b) 12 a3 ♖fc8 (or 12...♙xf3!? 13 ♙xf3 ♖fc8 14 b4 ♗d8) 13 b4 ♗d8 14 ♗b3 ♖d7 (also possible is 14...♗f8!?: for example, 15 h3 ♙xf3 16 ♙xf3 ♖d7 17 ♖fd1 ♖ce5 18 ♙e2 ♖xc4! 19 ♙xc4 ♖e5 20 ♙xf7+ ♗xf7 21 ♗xf7+ ♖xf7 22 ♖e2 was drawn here in W.Schmidt-A.Sznepik, Trnava 1984, although Black would have a slight initiative after either 22...♖c4 or 22...♖c4).

Here White has:



b1) 15 ♖ac1 ♗xf3 16 ♗xf3 ♗d4!? is a logical attempt to exchange dark-squared bishops.

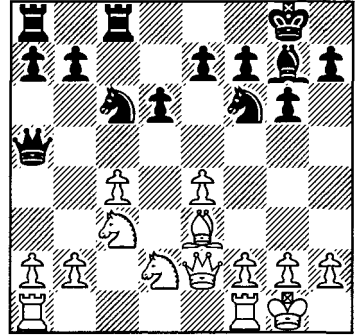
b2) 15 ♖ad1 ♗de5 (this is a sensible way to simplify the position) 16 ♗xe5 ♗xe2 17 ♗xe2 (not 17 ♗xc6? ♗xd1) 17...♗xe5 18 c5 ♖e8 19 cxd6 exd6 with the idea of ...♗c4 with counterplay.

b3) 15 ♖fd1 a5 (this looks logical, but it may not best; Black could also consider 15...b5!? with the idea 16 cxb5 ♗a5 17 bxa5 ♖xc3 or 15...♗de5!? 16 ♗xe5 ♗xe2 17 ♗xe2 ♗xe5 18 c5 ♖e8! as in variation 'b' above) 16 ♖ac1 (not 16 b5 ♗xf3 17 bxc6 ♗xe2 18 cxb7 ♗xd1 19 ♖xd1 ♖ab8 20 bxc8 ♖xc8 when Black has the better pawn structure) 16...axb4 17 axb4 ♖f8 18 h3 ♗xf3 19 ♗xf3 ♗h6?! 20 ♗xh6 ♖xh6 21 ♗g4! was good for White in E.Meduna-V.Babula, Lazne Bohdanec 1996.

12...♗xe2 13 ♖xe2 ♖fc8

There are several possibilities here, such as 13...♗d7, 13...♖ac8 and 13...♖h5!?. A relatively simple Maroczy structure has been reached. Here the light-squared bishops have been ex-

changed, which has plusses for both sides.



White has managed to exchange his least active minor piece, while Black can be satisfied with exchanging a set of pieces because he has less space. The position is very similar to the Moscow Variation of the Sicilian Defence (1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 d6 3 ♗b5+ ♗d7 4 ♗xd7+ ♖xd7 5 c4, with a quick d4 to follow). Here White's d2-knight is a bit oddly placed, but it does not change the contours of the position very much.

14 ♖ac1

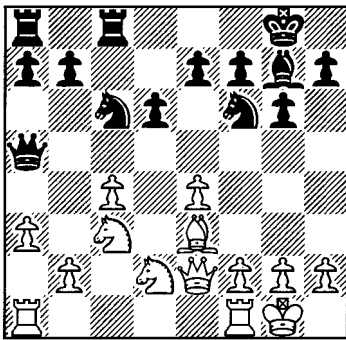
Others:

a) 14 f3 ♗d7 15 ♗b3 ♖d8 16 ♖ac1 ♗ce5 was pretty level in Dao Thien Hai-Bui Vinh Hue 2005.

b) 14 ♖fc1 ♗d7 (14...♖h5!?) 15 ♖ab1 a6. This is a tricky move to judge in these lines. It is very thematic for Black to try to get in ...b5, but sometimes Black would like to have this square available for the queen in order to pressure the c4-pawn. After 16 ♗h1 e6 17 ♗b3 ♖d8 18 f4 ♖ab8 19 ♗d1 ♗f8?! (this is too passive; 19...♖e7!? with the unusual idea of

20 ♖d2 ♙xc3 21 ♜xc3 ♘f6 gives Black chances of obtaining counterplay) 20 ♖d2 ♜c7 21 ♞bd1 ♘d8 22 c5! ♘xc5 23 ♘xc5 dxc5 24 ♖d7 ♜b6 25 f5! White had a strong attack in M.Petursson-P.Lyrberg, Reykjavik 1996.

c) Likewise, the little push 14 a3 may help White to advance on the queenside, but advancing the pawns also creates some weaknesses:

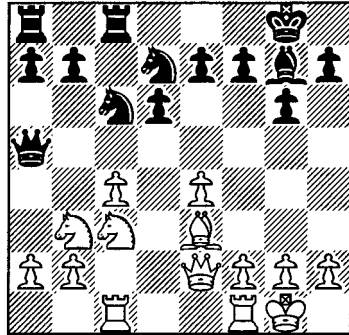


14...♘d7 (after 14...a6 15 ♞ac1 ♞ab8 16 ♞fd1 the advance 16...b5?! 17 c5! dxc5 18 ♘b3 ♜c7 19 ♘xc5 is very good for White, while 16...♜h5 17 ♜xh5 ♘xh5 was solid, although a bit passive for Black in N.Gaprindashvili-M.Voiska, Lucerne Olympiad 1982) 15 ♘b3 (15 b4 ♜d8 intending ...a5 gives Black enough play) 15...♜d8!? gave Black a reasonable Hedgehog position after 16 ♞ac1 b6 17 ♞fd1 ♘ce5 18 ♘d5 e6 19 ♘f4 ♜e7 20 ♘d4 a6 in A.Tashkhodzhaev-V.Loginov, Tashkent 1986. However, I would prefer the typical 15...♜a6! as suggested by Petursson.

14...♘d7 15 ♘b3

After 15 a3 Black has the usual array

of moves to choose from: 15...a6, 15...♜d8 and 15...♜a6!?



15...♜a6!

Instead 15...♜d8 was played with success in A.Moussa-F.Hellers, Baguio City 1987, but I prefer the text move.

16 f4!

It would be more prudent to simplify with 16 ♞fd1 ♘ce5 17 c5 ♜xe2 18 ♘xe2 ♘xc5 (18...♘g4!?) 19 ♘xc5 dxc5 20 ♙xc5 ♘c6 21 b3 with an equal position.

16...♘b6 17 ♘d2

White can try to simplify with 17 ♙xb6 ♜xb6+ 18 ♘h1, but clearly Black has no problems and 18...♘b4! would give him some initiative.

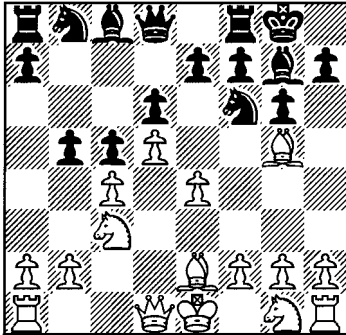
17...♘a4!

This is typical move to break down White's queenside. We have seen this idea before in Line B of Chapter 7. Here Black already has a strong initiative and after 18 e5?! dxe5 19 ♘ce4 exf4 20 ♞xf4 ♘xb2 he won easily in O.Rodriguez Vargas-G.Sigurjonsson, Las Palmas 1976.

B) 7 d5 b5!?

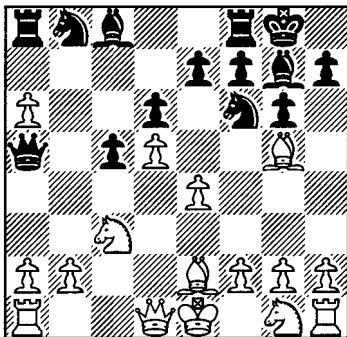
Black wastes no time in offering a

pawn. The justification for this method of play is that White has already developed his king bishop and it will likely move again to capture on either b5 or a6. White also needs to get his kingside developed and he sometimes experiences problems with his e4-pawn.



8 cxb5 a6 9 a4

This is almost universally played. White wants to clamp down on the queenside. Instead after 9 bxa6, 9...e4 is possible of course, but playing 9...a5! first threatens ...e4 and is even stronger.



White has:

a) 10 e2 e4 11 f3 (after 11

e4 12 e2 e4 13 f3 e4! gave Black a tremendous position in L.Popov-L.Christiansen, Wijk aan Zee 1977. White cannot castle and ...e4 is threatened.

b) 10 d2 b7! (with this clever move Black avoids the possibility of 10...e4 11 e4 e4 12 e2 e4 11 f3 e4 and now:

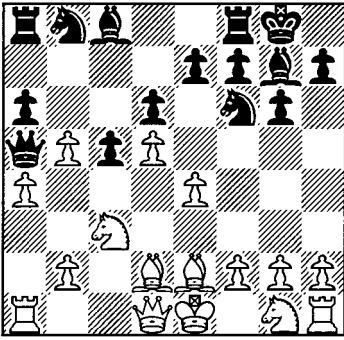
b1) 12 e4 e4 13 e2 e4 gives Black excellent play. In the Benko Black is often more than happy to exchange queens, as White's queenside becomes difficult to defend.

b2) 12 0-0! walks into 12...e4! 13 e4 e4 14 fxd2 e2 15 fe1 (White is also in trouble after 15 e7? fe8 16 fe1 e7 17 xe2 f5) 15...d3 and Black's strong bishops gave him a clear advantage in E.Bareev-T.Radjabov, Odessa (rapid) 2007.

b3) 12 d1 secures the centre, but loosens White's queenside. Here 12...h6! gives Black good play after 13 hx6?! hx6 14 xh6 e4 or 13 f4?! e2 14 xe2 h5! 15 d2 e8 when White's queenside is collapsing. Probably best is 13 h4, but after 13...g5 14 g3 h5 15 0-0 e8 Black has more than enough compensation for the pawn.

9...a5 10 e.d2

This is the best move. Instead 10 d2?! transposes to the note to White's 9th move in Line C.



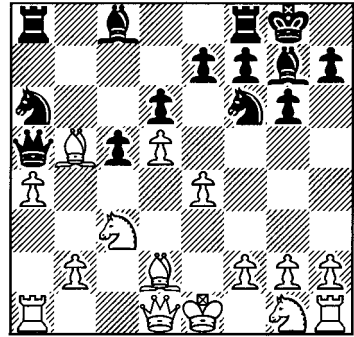
10...♖b4?

This is Black's sharpest try. Instead 10...axb5 11 ♔xb5 ♜xb5 ♝b6 12 ♝b1 – 12 ♝c2 ♘a6 heads for the b4-square – 12...e6! 13 dxe6 could be met by 13...♗xe6!? 14 ♘f3 ♘c6 with the idea 15 ♘xd6 ♘a5! or 13...fxe6 14 ♘f3 d5 15 exd5 exd5 16 0-0 ♘e4 17 ♗e3 ♘a6 18 ♘g5 ♘xg5 19 ♗xg5 ♘b4 20 ♝c1 ♞e8 21 ♗f3, as in W.Uhlmann-L.Szell, Halle 1982, when Black should have played 21...♗b7 or 21...♗f5 22 ♝d2 ♗e4!) and now:

a) 11...♗a6 12 ♘ge2 (also possible is 12 ♞a3 ♘bd7 13 ♘f3 ♗xb5 14 ♘b5 ♝b6 15 ♝c2) 12...♘bd7 (instead 12...♝b4 13 f3 c4!? is interesting, while after 12...♗xb5 13 ♘b5 ♝b6 14 ♘ec3 ♘a6 15 0-0 Black could consider 15...♘e8 with the idea of ...♘ec7) 13 0-0 and now 13...♗xb5 14 ♘b5 ♝b6 15 ♝c2 ♞fc8 16 ♗c3 gave White an ideal set-up in W.Uhlmann-J.Adamski, Polanica Zdroj 1967. Preferable was 13...♘e5, but White still looks better after 14 ♝c2 or 14 b3.

b) With 11...♘a6 Black wants to

bring the knight to the b4-square before playing ...♗a6.



White has:

b1) 12 ♘f3 ♘b4 13 0-0 ♗a6 and now:

b11) 14 ♝e2 ♘e8 15 ♗g5 f6 16 ♗f4 ♘c7 17 ♞a3 was S.Mohr-L.Vogt, Berlin 1990, when 17...f5!? would give Black some counterplay.

b12) 14 ♗g5 (White wants to play ♘d2-c4) 14...h6 15 ♗h4 ♗xb5 16 axb5 ♝c7 17 ♝d2 ♞xa1 18 ♞xa1 ♞b8 19 h3 was A.Yusupov-L.Vogt, Altensteig 1993. Black's compensation looks insufficient here.

b2) 12 ♘ge2 ♘b4 13 0-0 ♗a6 and here:

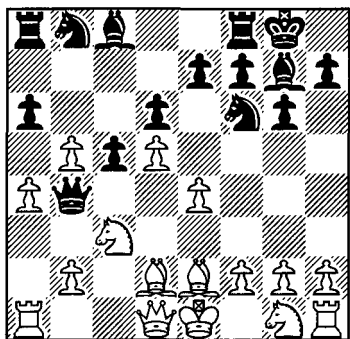
b21) 14 h3 ♝b6 15 ♞a3 ♘e8 16 ♗g5! f6 17 ♗e3 should favour White somewhat, but the position is not so easy to play. After 17...♘c7 18 ♝b3?! ♘b5 19 axb5 ♗xb5 20 ♘b5 ♝xb5 21 ♘c3 ♝d3 22 ♞d1 ♝c2 23 ♝c4 f5! Black had good counterplay in Z.Kormanyos-L.Szell, Hungarian League 1986.

b22) 14 ♞a3 ♞f8 (14...♘g4!?) 15 h3 ♘e8 16 ♗g5 ♞a7 17 ♝d2 ♝d8 and

again Black may not have enough objectively, although following 18 $\text{♙xa6}?! \text{♜xa6}$ 19 $\text{♜b5} \text{♞ab7}$ 20 $\text{♜ec3} \text{♞a5}$ 21 $\text{♜d1?!} \text{♞xd2}$ 22 $\text{♙xd2} \text{♜ec7}$ 23 $\text{♜xc7} \text{♜xc7}$ 24 $\text{♙c3} \text{♞b3}$ Black was taking over in E.Grivas-L.Vogt, Thessaloniki Olympiad 1988.

b23) 14 f3 ♞b6 (Black could also consider 14... ♞fb8 or 14... ♙xb5 15 $\text{♜xb5} \text{♜d7}$) 15 $\text{♙e3} \text{♜e8}$ 16 $\text{♞b3} \text{♞b7}$ (Black could consider 16... ♞a5 17 $\text{♙xa6} \text{♜xa6}$ when his knights can fight for the b5-square from c7) 17 $\text{♙xa6} \text{♞xa6}$ (or 17... ♞xa6 18 $\text{♜b5} \text{♞b7}$ with the idea of ... ♜c7) 18 $\text{♜a2} \text{♜c7}$ 19 $\text{♜xb4} \text{♞b6}$ 20 $\text{♙d2} \text{♜a6}$ 21 a5 ♞b5 22 ♞c4 was Dao Thien Hai-I.Morovic Fernandez, Yerevan Olympiad 1996. Now Black should have considered 22... ♜xb4 23 $\text{♜c3} \text{♙xc3}$ 24 bxc3 (or 24 $\text{♙xc3} \text{♞a8}$) 24... ♜a6 , although his position does look a bit shaky here.

Taking on b5 and going with a 'normal' Benko approach is interesting, but White should keep an edge with accurate play. The text move is risky, but also causes White more practical problems.



11 ♞c2

White protects the b2- and e4-pawns in a very natural way. There are a few alternatives:

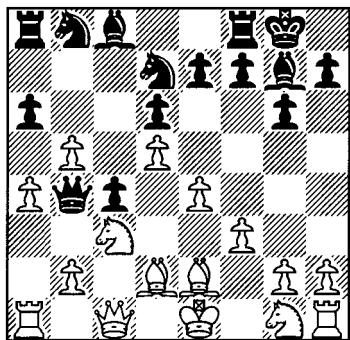
a) 11 ♞b1 was originally suggested by Kasparov. After 11... axb5 White has:

a1) 12 $\text{♙xb5} \text{♙a6}$ 13 f3 ♞a5 14 $\text{♜ge2} \text{♞b6}$ 15 $\text{♞d3} \text{♜bd7}$ 16 $\text{♙xa6} \text{♞xa6}$ 17 0-0 ♞fa8 (if 17... c4+ 18 ♞e3) 18 $\text{♙e3} \text{♜e5}$ 19 $\text{♞c2} \text{♜c4}$ 20 $\text{♙c1} \text{♜a5}$ 21 ♞a2 was M.Fabrizi-A.Sutton, correspondence 1999. Here 21... c4+ 22 $\text{♜h1} \text{♜d7}$ would give Black good play for the pawn.

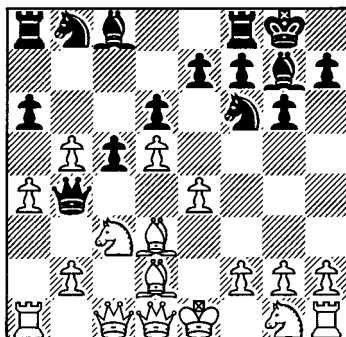
a2) 12 f3!? c4?! (Black must avoid 12... bxa4 13 $\text{♜b5} \text{♞b3}$ 14 ♞a3 , but the sensible 12... ♞a5 looks okay) 13 $\text{axb5} \text{♞xa1}$ 14 ♞xa1 and Black did not have enough for the pawn in Hoang Thanh Trang-M.Kouvatsou, Calicut 1998.

a3) 12 a5 is tricky: 12... $\text{♞xa5}!?$ (instead 12... c4 13 $\text{♜a4} \text{c3}$ was S.Halkias-A.Vajda, Varna 1994; here 14 $\text{♙xc3!} \text{♞xe4}$ 15 $\text{♞xe4} \text{♜xe4}$ 16 $\text{♙xg7} \text{♜xg7}$ 17 $\text{♜b6} \text{♞a7}$ 18 ♙xb5 would give White the advantage) 13 ♜a2 (after 13 $\text{♜a4} \text{♞xe4}$ 14 $\text{♞xe4} \text{♜xe4}$ 15 $\text{♙xa5} \text{bxa4}$ 16 ♞xa4 Black has good play with 16... $\text{♙d4}!?$ or simply 16... ♜f6 targeting the d5-pawn) 13... ♞a4 14 ♙d1 (or 14 b3 ♞xe4 15 $\text{♙xa5} \text{♞xg2}$ 16 $\text{♙f3} \text{♞g5}$ 17 $\text{♙c3} \text{♜xd5}$ 18 $\text{♙xg7} \text{♜xg7}$, as given by Panczyk and Ilczuk) 14... ♞xe4+ 15 $\text{♞xe4} \text{♜xe4}$ 16 $\text{♙xa5} \text{♙xb2}$ 17 $\text{♞b1} \text{♙d4}$ gives Black very interesting compensation for the rook (!).

b) 11 f3 ♜fd7 (11... $\text{c4}!?$) 12 ♞c1 (12 $\text{♞c2} \text{c4}$ 13 $\text{♜d1} \text{♞c5}$ 14 ♞xc4 transposes) 12... c4 and now:



11... ♖xb2?? 12 ♜b1 ♗a3 13 ♜b3, so he must look for a way to create counterplay:



b1) 13 a5 axb5 14 ♗a4 ♖b3! 15 ♜a3 bxa4 16 ♜xb3 cxb3 17 ♙c3 ♙xc3+ 18 ♙xc3 ♙a6 gave Black good compensation for the queen in A.Sorin-O.Panno, Acasusso 1991.

b2) 13 ♗d1 ♖c5 and then:
b21) 14 b6 a5 (14... ♖xb6!? 15 a5 ♖a7 is also possible) 15 ♖xc4 was W.Uhlmann-Kr.Georgiev, Warsaw 1983. Here Black should play the simple 15... ♖xb6 with ideas like ... ♙a6 and ... ♗c5.

b22) 14 ♙xc4 was suggested by Panczyk and Ilczuk. Black can play 14... ♗b6 15 ♙e2 ♖xc1 16 ♙xc1 axb5 17 ♙xb5 ♙d7 with good play for the pawns. This is similar to variation 'b23'.

b23) 14 ♖xc4 ♖xc4! (two pawns down, Black displays excellent judgement in exchanging queens) 15 ♙xc4 ♗b6 16 ♙e2 axb5 17 ♙xb5 ♙d7 18 ♙xd7 ♗8xd7 19 a5 ♗c4 20 ♙c3 was Y.Yakovich-M.Damjanovic, Bela Crkva 1990. Now 20... ♙xc3+ 21 bxc3 (or 21 ♗xc3 ♜fb8) 21... ♗xa5 would leave Black with good play for the pawn.

c) After 11 ♙d3 Black cannot play

c1) 11... ♗g4 12 ♗f3 c4?! 13 ♙e2 axb5 14 axb5 ♜xa1 15 ♖xa1 gave White a big advantage in I.Farago-S.Garcia Martinez, Rome 1990, but Black could have considered 12... ♗d7!? with ideas like ... ♗ge5 or ...c4 and ... ♗c5.

c2) 11... ♗fd7!? 12 ♗f3 c4 13 ♙c2 ♖xb2 14 ♜b1 ♗a3 15 ♗e2 ♗c5 16 0-0 ♗d3 17 ♗c1 (17 ♗fd4 is a better try) 17... ♗b2 18 ♖e1 c3 19 ♙e3 axb5 20 axb5 ♖b4 21 ♗e2 ♙g4 gave Black good play in F.Portisch-A.Biro, Budapest 1999.

c3) 11...c4 is consider best, but I have my doubts. White has:

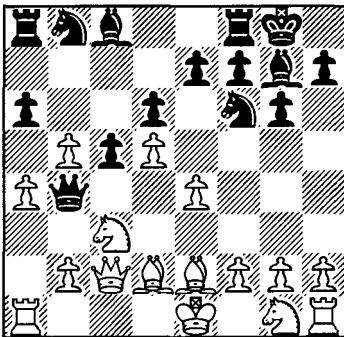
c31) 12 ♙c2!? looks the most consistent, but it has not been seen much in practice. After 12... ♗bd7 13 ♗ge2, as in I.Farago-V.Zaitsev, Montecatini Terme 1999, Black should probably bite the bullet and play 13... ♖xb2!?, although White can at the very least force a draw with 14 ♜b1 ♗a3 15 ♙c1 ♖c5 16 ♙e3.

c32) 12 ♙e2 is seen more often in practice. Then 12... ♗fd7! and now:

c321) 13 ♖c1 ♗c5! 14 ♘d1 c3! 15 ♙xc3 ♜xe4 16 ♜e3 ♜xe3 17 ♗xe3 axb5 18 ♙xb5 ♙d7 19 ♙xg7 ♖xg7 was D.Kosanovic-R.Szuhanek, Belgrade 1995. Black is better developed and will win back the pawn, while maintaining a slight initiative.

c322) 13 ♗f3 ♗c5 14 0-0 ♗b3 15 ♖b1 ♙g4!? (or 15...♗d7) 16 ♙g5 ♖e8 17 ♗d2 ♙xe2 18 ♜xe2 axb5 19 ♗xb3 ♜xb3 20 axb5 ♗d7 21 ♙e3 ♖eb8 22 ♜d2 was V.Milov-M.Hochstrasser, Winterthur 2001. Here 22...♗e5, with some compensation, looks best.

Returning to 11 ♜c2:

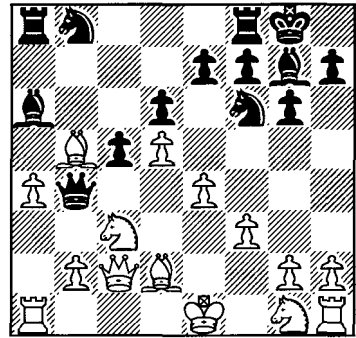


11...axb5 12 ♙xb5

The tricky 12 f3!? should be met with 12...♜a5! 13 ♙xb5 ♗a6 14 ♗ge2 ♗b4 intending ...♙a6 or even ...e6.

12...♙a6 13 f3

Instead 13 ♖b1 ♙xb5 14 axb5 ♗bd7 15 ♗f3 was A.Lukin-Ma.Tseitlin, USSR 1982. Here Black could simply play 15...♖fb8 with the idea of ...♗e8-c7, or even the immediate 15...♗e8. White would be hard pressed to hold on to his extra pawn.



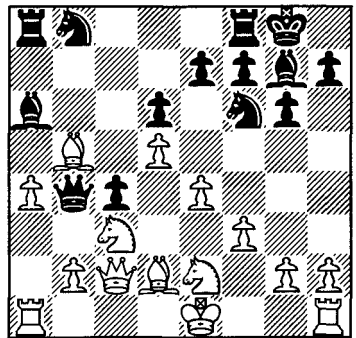
13...c4

Black creates squares for his knights on c5 or d3, while ...♜c5 becomes possible. Other moves tend to lose the queen:

a) 13...♗fd7? 14 ♗d1 ♜d4 15 ♙c3 ♙xb5 16 ♙xd4 cxd4 17 ♖a3 was clearly insufficient for Black in W.Uhlmann-L.Szell, Zamardi 1980.

b) 13...♙xb5!? 14 ♗xb5 ♜xb5 15 axb5 ♖xa1+ 16 ♙c1 ♗bd7 (worse is 16...♙h6 17 ♗e2 ♙e3 18 ♜c3) 17 ♗e2 ♖b8 and Black has some practical chances after 18 0-0 ♙xb5 or 18 ♗c3 ♗e8, although objectively it should not be enough.

14 ♗ge2

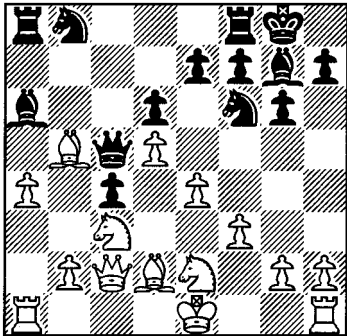


14 ♖c5

Black makes it difficult for White to castle. Instead 14...♭fd7!? is possible. After 15 0-0 ♖c5 16 ♗e3 Black has:

a) 16...♭bd7 17 ♗xd7!? ♭xd7 18 ♭d4 ♭e5 19 ♖ab1 (19 ♖fb1!?) 19...♗c8 20 ♭c6 ♭xc6 21 dxc6 e6 22 ♖fd1 ♖a6 23 c7 ♗d7 24 ♖d2 ♖c8 25 ♭b5 ♖xa4 26 ♭xd6 ♖xc7 27 ♭xc4 ♖b3 was N.Legky-D.Dumitrache, Sautron 2001. Now 28 ♖bc1 could cause Black some problems: for example, 28...♖xc4 29 ♖xc4 ♖xc4 30 ♖xd7 when 30...♗xb2? would lose to 31 ♖d8+ ♗g7 32 ♖d2!.

b) 16...♭b3! 17 ♖ad1 ♗xb5 18 axb5 ♭d7 19 ♭d4 ♭xd4 20 ♗xd4 ♗xd4+ (20...♭e5!? is another possibility) 21 ♖xd4 ♭e5 when Black had enough compensation for the pawn and went on to win in L.Gubernatorova-N.Rashkovsky, Krasnodar 1997.

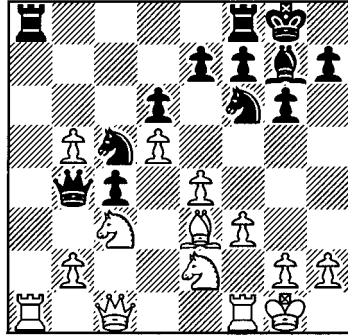


15 ♖c1 ♗xb5

Another possibility is 15...♭fd7 16 ♗e3 ♖b4 17 0-0 ♭c5.

16 ♗e3 ♖b4 17 axb5 ♭bd7 18 0-0 ♭c5

Black has active pieces and a good pawn structure. Some possibilities:



a) 19 ♖c2 ♭fd7 1/2-1/2 was E.Meduna-Kr.Georgiev, Plovdiv 1982. Not very informative perhaps, but I think Black has sufficient play.

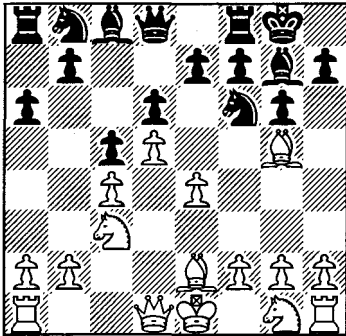
b) 19 ♖xa8!? looks critical. After 19...♖xa8 20 ♭d4 ♭d3 21 ♭c6! ♖b3 22 ♖d2 White is better, but 22...♗f8 allows Black to maintain practical chances.

c) 19 ♭d4 was recommended by Panczyk and Ilczuk. Flear also recommended this and continued 19...♭b3 20 ♭xb3 cxb3 21 ♖a6. Here I think that 21...♭d7! gives Black enough counterplay. For example:

c1) 22 ♖a1 ♖xa6! 23 bxa6 (after 23 ♖xa6 ♗xc3 24 bxc3 ♖xc3 Black's b-pawn is the more dangerous and his pieces are the better coordinated) 23...♖a8 with ideas like ...♭c5 or ...♗d4 gives Black an excellent position.

c2) 22 ♖c6 ♭e5 intends ...♭c4 and 23 b6?! fails to 23...♭xc6 24 dxc6 ♗xc3! 25 bxc3 (Black wins immediately after 25 ♖xc3 ♖xc3 26 bxc3 b2) 25...♖b5 26 c7 b2 27 ♖c2 ♖xf1+! 28 ♗xf1 ♖a1+ 29 ♗e2 b1 ♖ 30 ♖xb1 ♖xb1 when Black is much better, even if he has to give up a rook...

C) 7 d5 a6



With this move, Black makes it clear that he is ready to play a Benko with ...b5.

8 a4

White can hardly do without this move:

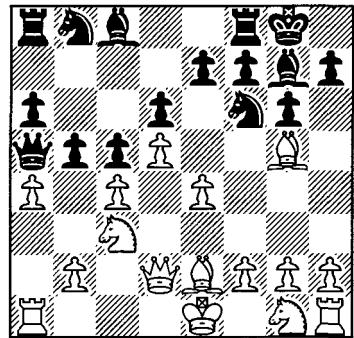
a) 8 $\text{c}f3$ $b5$ 9 $cxb5$ $axb5$ 10 $\text{c}xb5$ $\text{c}xe4!$ is a typical combination. After 11 $\text{c}xe4$ $\text{c}a5+$ 12 $\text{c}c3$ $\text{c}xc3+$ 13 $bxc3$ $\text{c}xb5$ Black is much better: for example, 14 $\text{c}e2$ (or 14 $\text{c}d2$ $\text{c}d3!$) 14... $\text{c}xe2+$ 15 $\text{c}xe2$ $\text{c}a6+$ with the idea of ...f6 when Black's pawn structure is much the superior: the a2- and d5-pawns are targets for Black's bishop.

b) 8 $\text{c}d2$ $\text{c}a5$ (Black can also play 8... $b5$ 9 $cxb5$ $\text{c}a5$ when 10 $bxa6$ $\text{c}bd7$ transposes to note 'b' to White's 9th move in Line B) and here 9 a4 b5! is the note to White's 9th move, below, while 9 f3 can be met with 9... $b5$ 10 $cxb5$ $\text{c}d7!$?. Black keeps the bishop on the h3-c8 diagonal to make it difficult for White to develop his kingside, as $\text{c}h3$ will always be met with ... $\text{c}xh3$. After 11 $bxa6$ $\text{c}xa6$ 12 $\text{c}xa6$ $\text{c}xa6$ (or 12... $\text{c}xa6$

13 $\text{c}ge2$ $\text{c}fb8$) 13 $\text{c}ge2$ $\text{c}b8$ 14 $\text{c}c1$ $\text{c}ab6$ 15 $\text{c}c2$ $\text{c}c8!$ 16 0-0 $\text{c}a6$ Black's bishop-pair and queenside play gave him excellent compensation for the pawn in R.Palus-M.Kaminski, Wisla 1998.

8... $\text{c}a5$ 9 $\text{c}d2$

The natural 9 $\text{c}d2$ leaves the a1-rook unprotected, so Black can play 9... $b5!$ with an excellent Benko Gambit.



After 10 $cxb5$ Black has more than one good continuation:

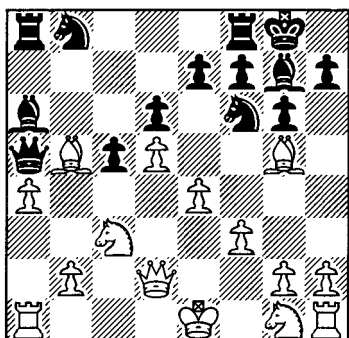
a) 10... $\text{c}bd7$ 11 $\text{c}a3$ $\text{c}b4$ and now Black has a further pleasant choice:

a1) 12 $\text{c}f3$ $axb5$ 13 $\text{c}xb5$ $\text{c}xe4$ 14 $\text{c}xe4$ $\text{c}xe4+$ 15 $\text{c}e3$ $\text{c}b1+$ 16 $\text{c}d1$ $\text{c}xd1+$ 17 $\text{c}xd1$ $\text{c}f6$ 18 $\text{c}xe7$ $\text{c}xd5$ 19 $\text{c}c6$ $\text{c}xe7$ 20 $\text{c}xe7$ $\text{c}b8$ 21 $\text{c}b5$ $\text{c}xb5!$ 22 $axb5$ $\text{c}e8$ 23 $\text{c}g5$ $\text{c}e6$ with an easily winning endgame in J.Bick-D.Vigorito, Las Vegas 2006.

a2) 12 $f3$ $axb5$ 13 $\text{c}xb5$ $\text{c}a6$ 14 $\text{c}xf6$ (instead 14 $\text{c}xd7?$ $\text{c}xd7$ 15 $\text{c}xe7$ $\text{c}fe8$ with the idea of ... $\text{c}e5$ gives Black a crushing initiative, while 14 $\text{c}a2$ $\text{c}xd2+$ 15 $\text{c}xd2$ $\text{c}xb5$ 16 $axb5$ $\text{c}xa3$ 17 $bxa3$ $\text{c}a8$ allows Black to win back the pawn

with a good endgame) 14...♖xf6 15 ♟xa6 ♜xa6 16 ♜ge2 ♜b8 17 ♜a2 ♜d7 and Black had excellent compensation for the pawn in A.Anastasian-G.Mittelman, Saint Vincent 2000.

b) 10...axb5 11 ♟xb5 ♟a6 12 f3 (instead 12 ♟xa6 ♜xa6 13 ♜ge2 c4 14 0-0 ♜c5 gives Black excellent play) and now:

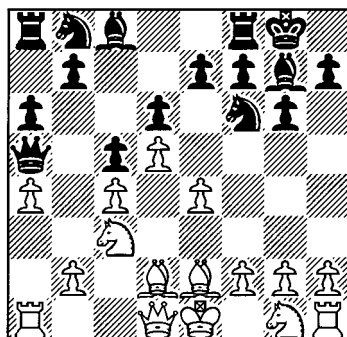


b1) 12...♜b4 13 ♟xa6 ♜xa6 14 ♜ge2 ♜bd7 15 0-0 ♜b6 16 b3 c4 gave Black some counterplay in Dao Thien Hai-V.Tkachiev, Singapore 1995.

b2) 12...♜xe4! forces White to thread his way to equality: 13 fxe4 (if 13 ♜xe4?! ♟xb5 White loses material after 14 ♟xe7 ♜e8, while 14 ♜c3 ♟c4 leaves Black clearly better) 13...♟xc3 14 ♜xc3 (worse is 14 bxc3 ♟xb5) 14...♜xc3+ 15 bxc3 ♟xb5 16 ♟xe7 (16 ♜f3 f6 leaves Black with the much better structure) 16...♜e8 17 ♟xd6 ♜xe4+ 18 ♜f2 ♜d7 and Black wins back the pawn with at least equality, as 19 a5 ♟c4 picks up the d5-pawn.

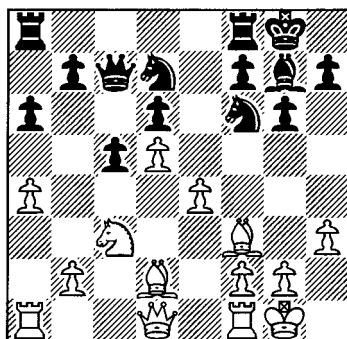
With 9 ♟d2 White has managed to prevent ...b5, but his bishop has been lured back to a passive position. Black

must change plans now and enter a Benoni structure.



9...e6 10 ♜f3 exd5 11 exd5

White plays the typical 'Averbakh' capture. Instead 11 ♜xd5 ♜d8 is harmless, as despite the backwards d-pawn Black will find active squares for all his pieces with ...♜c6 and ...♟e6. White can also capture with the c-pawn, but the position arising after 11 cxd5 ♟g4 12 0-0 ♜c7 13 h3 ♟xf3 14 ♟xf3 ♜bd7 is quite satisfactory for Black.



This is very similar to a line of the Modern Benoni: 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e6 4 ♜c3 exd5 5 cxd5 d6 6 e4 g6 7 ♜f3 ♟g7 8 ♟e2 0-0 9 0-0 a6 10 a4 ♟g4 11 ♟f4

♙xf3 (Black usually captures immediately to avoid 11...♖e8 12 ♘d2! ♙xe2 13 ♚xe2 intending ♘c4 with pressure against the d6-pawn) 12 ♙xf3 which is considered very satisfactory for Black. Here Black still needs to spend a tempo defending his d6-pawn (usually with ...♚e7), before developing his b8-knight, because White's bishop is on the active f4-square. Black also was compelled to capture on f3 without waiting for White to play h2-h3. Even so, Black has scored very well in this line.

In the King's Indian position, Black has already developed his b8-knight and connected his rooks, while White's bishop is on the more passive d2-square. Black can look forward to the middlegame with confidence. One example of what Black is aiming for went: 15 a5 ♖fe8 16 ♚c2 c4! 17 ♖a4 ♘e5 18 ♙e2 ♘fd7 19 f4 ♘d3 20 b3 (or 20 ♙xd3 cxd3 21 ♚xd3 ♘c5 when Black is clearly better after 22 ♖c4 ♚xa5 or 22 ♚c4 ♖ac8 23 ♖aa1 ♘xe4) 20...b5 21 axb6, H.Pfleger-A.Rodriguez, La Habana 1982, and here the clearest way to seize the initiative is with 21...♘xb6!.

By capturing with the e-pawn White hopes to stifle Black's counterplay and gradually squeeze out a win in an end-game.

11...♙g4

Black needs the d7-square for his knight, and therefore does not mind exchanging pieces, even at the cost of giving White the bishop-pair.

12 0-0 ♘bd7

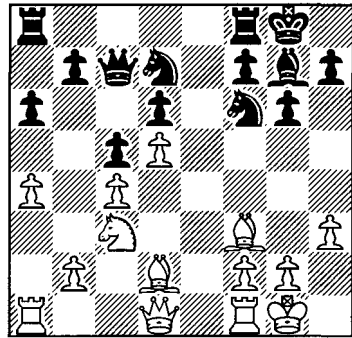
Black can also retreat immediately: 12...♚c7 13 h3 ♙xf3 14 ♙xf3 simply transposes.

13 h3

White spends a tempo to acquire the bishop-pair. Instead 13 ♘b5 leads nowhere after 13...♚d8: for example, 14 ♘xd6? ♚c7.

13...♙xf3 14 ♙xf3 ♚c7

White was threatening ♘b5 this time, but Black's queen has done its job.



15 ♚c2

This is a flexible move which allows White to connect his rooks. Others:

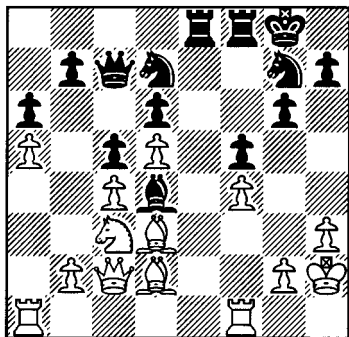
a) 15 g4 looks extravagant, but play soon begins to look very similar to the main lines: 15...♘e8! (this is the key move for Black) 16 ♙e2 ♙d4 17 ♙g2 ♘g7 18 ♚c2 f5 19 f4 ♘f6 20 ♙f3 fxg4!. This is a notable idea. Black appears to give up a little space, but if White can play g4-g5 Black's knights will lack squares. After exchanging on g4, such an advance would give Black the f5-square. Here 21 hxg4 ♖ae8 22 ♖ae1 was W.Schmidt-M.Marin, Warsaw 1987, and now 22...♚d7 23 ♙g3 ♘fh5+!? (already

Black can force a draw if he so chooses) 24 gxh5 ♖f5+ 25 ♖g2 ♜xe1 26 ♜xe1 ♖h4+ 27 ♖g3 ♖xf3 28 ♖xf3 ♜h3+ 29 ♖e2 ♜xh5+ 30 ♖d3 ♜f5+ 31 ♜e4 ♜e8 32 ♖e2 ♜g4+ results in perpetual check.

b) 15 a5 is a common motif in such structures, but there is no need to rush, as the pawn will need some tending to. The weakness of the a5-pawn can make it difficult for White to use his rooks on the e-file. After 15...♖e8! White has:

b1) 16 ♜e1 ♙e5 17 ♜c1 ♖g7 18 ♖e2 ♜ae8 19 g3 ♜e7 20 ♙g4 h5 21 ♙xd7 ♜xd7 22 ♖g2 ♜fe8 23 ♖g1 ♖f5 24 ♖f3 ♖d4 (Black could break through immediately with 24...♙xg3! 25 fxg3 ♜e2+ 26 ♜xe2 ♜xe2+ 27 ♖g1 ♖xg3 with a winning attack) 25 ♖xe5?! ♜xe5 26 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 27 ♜a3 ♜f5 28 ♜d1 ♜e2 29 ♙e3 ♜f3+ 0-1 V.Frenklakh-J.Fang, Stratton Mountain 1993.

b2) 16 ♜c2 ♙e5 17 ♙e2 ♖g7 18 ♙d3 f5 19 f4 ♙d4+ 20 ♖h2 ♜ae8 is a good example of the problems that can arise if White plays a4-a5 too early.



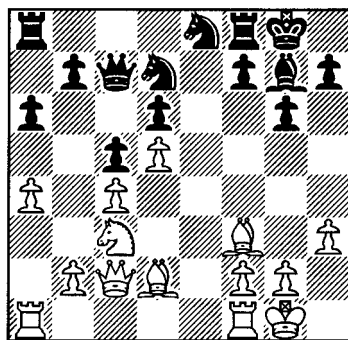
Black is threatening the positionally desirable ...♙e3 and White is not in a

good position to challenge the e-file. After 21 ♜f3 ♜e7 22 ♖e2 ♙f6 23 ♜e3 ♜xe3 24 ♙xe3 ♜e8 25 ♙d2 ♜d8 26 ♖g1 ♖h5 27 g3 ♙d4 28 ♜e1? ♖xg3! 29 ♖xg3 ♜xe1 30 ♙xe1 ♙xg1 Black was up a healthy pawn in J.Gonzalez Garcia-J.Fang, New York 1993. Oddly enough Joe Fang thought he was going to play Kaidanov in this particular round and we prepared this line of the Averbakh. It turned out that he played Gonzalez Garcia instead and the Averbakh arose anyway! Years later Joe would get his chance against Kaidanov, but the end result was less favourable...

15...♖e8!

This is a very important move which is part of Black's plan. This system was recommended by Andrew Martin in *Winning With the King's Indian* and it has been played frequently by the aforementioned American IM Joe Fang.

Instead 15...♜fe8 would likely see a premature exchange of all the rooks. This would give White what he is looking for, as discussed in the introduction to Chapter 8.



With the text, Black's plan is to play ...♗e5 or ...♗d4, followed by ...♖g7-f5. Often White will prevent this with g2-g4 at some point, but then ...f5 can be played. With very accurate play White may keep some advantage, but with White's kingside pawns advancing Black is likely to get some tactical chances.

16 ♖ae1

Instead 16 a5?! would transpose to note 'b2' to White's 15th move, above. Another option is to immediately move the f3-bishop with 16 ♗e2, which would also allow White to advance his f-pawn. As the bishop may go to d3, it is not likely that Black will be able to bring a knight to f5. Therefore Black plays 16...f5 17 f4 ♗d4+ 18 ♖h2 ♖g7 19 ♗f3 (the bishop stays on the kingside to support the advance g2-g4; similar is 19 ♖ae1 ♖ae8 20 ♗f3 ♖f6) 19...♖ae8 20 ♖e2?! (missing the point; White had to play 20 ♖ae1) 20...♗e3! (exchanging bishops will not only deny White the bishop-pair, it will activate Black's rooks) 21 ♗e1 (White retreats, but his position becomes too passive) 21...♖f6 22 ♖a3 ♖e7 23 ♖d3 g5! 24 fxg5 ♗xg5 (a good alternative is 24...♖g4+ 25 hxg4 fxg4 with the initiative; if 26 ♗xg4? ♖xf1) 25 ♗d2 ♖e5+ 26 g3 ♖xe2+! 27 ♖g1 (after 27 ♗xe2 ♖xe2+ 28 ♖g1 ♖e4 29 ♖d1 Black should avoid 29...♖e8? 30 ♖e1 and instead play 30...♖h5! with good compensation for the queen) 27...♖e5 28 ♗xg5 ♖xg3+ 29 ♖g2 ♖xg2+ 30 ♗xg2 ♖e4 by which point Black had active pieces and an extra pawn in A.Lombard-

S.Gligoric, Siegen Olympiad 1970.

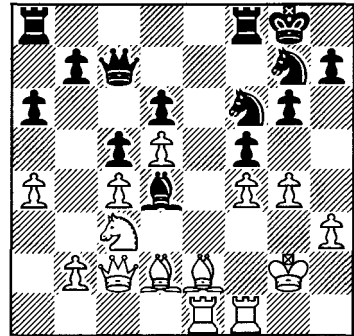
16...♗e5

Another possibility is 16...f5 17 ♗e2 ♗d4.

17 ♗e2

Instead 17 ♗.d1 looks a bit extravagant, but 17...♖g7 18 g4 f5 19 f4 ♗d4+ 20 ♖g2 ♖ae8 (20...♖f6 and 20...fxg4 are possible improvements) 21 g5 ♖xe1 22 ♖xe1 ♖e8 23 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 24 h4 gave White a good position to work with in M.Petursson-K.Berg, Gausdal 1990, although Black did hold in the end.

17...♖g7 18 g4 f5 19 f4 ♗d4+ 20 ♖g2 ♖f6



21 ♗f3

White covers the e4-square. The immediate 21 g5 could be met with 21...♗xc3! 22 ♗xc3 ♖e4.

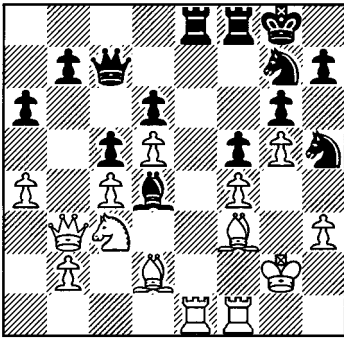
21...♖ae8

Here Black should consider the idea used by Marin: 21...fxg4!? 22 hxg4 ♖d7 with the idea of 23 g5 ♖fh5 with unclear play.

22 g5 ♖fh5 23 ♖b3!

White intends to grab Black's bishop with ♖e2. The immediate 23 ♖e2?! ♗e3

is satisfactory for Black.



Even though White has executed his plan in exemplary fashion (although Black has a few places to look for im-

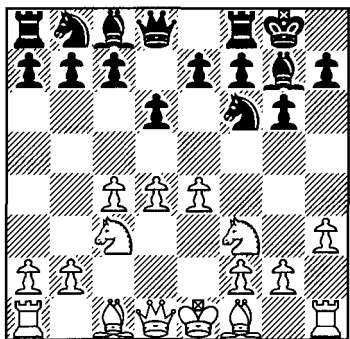
provements), Black still managed to erect a near fortress with 23...♙xc3 24 ♚xc3 a5! 25 b3 b6 26 ♙c1 ♚f7 27 ♚f2 ♜d8 28 ♙b2 ♞xe1 29 ♞xe1 ♞e8. Despite White's obvious advantage, it is difficult to find any way to break through and White felt compelled to make a speculative sacrifice with 30 ♞e6 ♜xe6 31 dxe6+. Now instead of 31...♞xe6? 32 ♙xh5 gxh5 33 ♜g7+ ♚e8 34 ♙f6 with a winning position for White in G.Kaidanov-J.Fang, Philadelphia 1998, 31...♚xe6! would have given Black good chances to repel the attack while keeping his material advantage.

Chapter 10

Makogonov Variation

5 ♘f3 0-0 6 h3

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5
 ♖f3 0-0 6 h3



The Makogonov Variation is related to the Classical lines examined in Volume I. Here White plays 6 h3 instead of 6 ♗e2. White plays in a flexible manner, often closing the position, which leads to complicated strategic play. Often play is similar to lines of the Petrosian Variation and in some cases can even transpose.

6...e5

We will continue in this principled

manner. Black frequently plays 6...♗a6 first, intending 7 ♗e3 e5 or 7 ♗g5 ♖e8 which can transpose into our repertoire. There is one issue with 6...♗a6, however, which I do not want to deal with. White can play 7 g3! when both ♘f3 and h3 fit in nicely with a fianchetto. Black is hard-pressed to avoid lines that fall outside of our repertoire: for example, 7...e5 (after 7...c5 8 ♗g2 cxd4 9 ♘xd4 Black's a6-knight is misplaced in a Maroczy structure) 8 ♗g2 exd4 9 ♘xd4 ♖e8 10 0-0 ♘c5 11 ♖e1 and suddenly Black has been bamboozled into the old main line of the Fianchetto Variation where he has trouble creating counterplay.

After 6...e5, White usually closes the centre with 7 d5. We will consider a few options here. Line B follows the same line of play as the system examined in the 8 h3 variation of the Petrosian. Often play will transpose, but here we limit ourselves to independent lines. In Line C Black tries to do without ...a5. This

saves a tempo, but Black must be careful not to allow the a6-knight to get sidelined. Line D is Black's main independent course in the Makogonov. Firstly, we have to look at the exchange 7 dxe5, which is of course similar to the Exchange Variation in Volume I.

- A: 7 dxe5**
B: 7 d5 a5
C: 7 d5 ♖a6
D: 7 d5 ♖h5

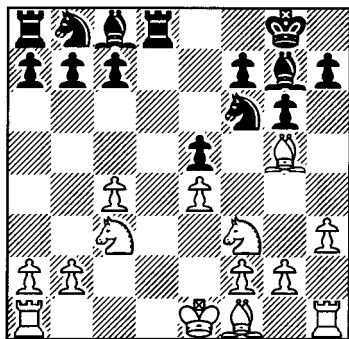
A) 7 dxe5

Of course this move should not be very dangerous, but we will look at it closely because it was recommended by Grivas as a secondary line for White in *Beating the Fianchetto Defences*.

7...dxe5 8 ♖xd8

Invariably played, although of late 8 ♖e3 has been seen a little. White's idea is 8...♖e7 9 ♖d5 ♖xd5 10 cxd5, but after 8...c6 9 ♖c2 ♖e7 10 ♖e2 ♖a6 11 0-0 ♖h5 Black was comfortable in E.Miroshnichenko-H.Ziska, Reykjavik 2011.

8...♖xd8 9 ♖g5



The only difference between this position and the proper Exchange Variation in the Classical is that White has played h3 instead of ♖e2. This does not affect the position much, but there are some cases where one side or the other is better off with h3 played.

9...♖a6!?

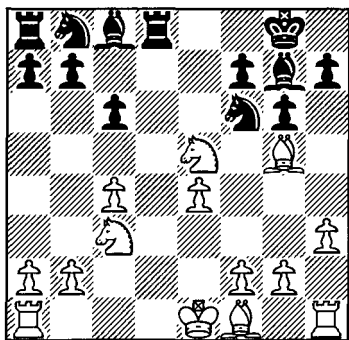
This is an interesting, independent line which is suddenly justified by White's delay in playing ♖e2. The alternatives are also quite playable, although there can be some slight differences compared to the variations examined in Volume I:

a) 9...♖e8 is Black's most solid continuation, as it is in the normal Exchange Variation. After 10 ♖d5 ♖xd5 11 cxd5 c6 12 ♖c4 cxd5 13 ♖xd5 ♖d7 14 ♖d2 ♖c5 Grivas suggests 15 ♖c4 (15 0-0-0 can be compared to normal lines – White's extra move h3 has little bearing on the assessment of the position) 15...♖f8 16 ♖d1 ♖e6 17 f3 ♖ac8 18 b3 and as mentioned in Volume I, Black's simplest solution is 18...♖xd5 19 ♖xd5 b5 20 ♖d6 ♖xd6 21 ♖xd6 ♖e6 22 ♖e3 ♖c2 23 ♖d2. Here instead of 23...♖ec8 24 ♖e2, as given by Grivas, Black can just play 23...♖c1+ 24 ♖d1 ♖c2 with a draw.

b) 9...♖bd7 is also similar to the analogous line in the Exchange Variation. After 10 0-0-0 ♖f8 11 ♖d5 c6 12 ♖e7+ ♖h8 13 ♖e3 ♖e8 14 ♖xc8 ♖axc8 White can play 15 g4, but this move is playable even without h3 being played. In this position White will likely bring the bishop to h3 instead of g4, al-

though the effect will be the same. White is probably very slightly better.

c) 9...c6 is playable here too, but there are more differences after 10 ♖xe5 and now:

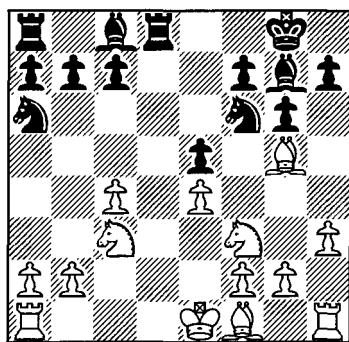


c1) 10...♖e8 follows the same pattern as in the main lines: 11 0-0-0 ♖a6 12 ♜f3 (worse is 12 f4?! ♜h5! exploiting White's weakened kingside, while 12 ♞d6 ♙e6 looks okay for Black) 12...♜c5 13 ♜d2 (Grivas prefers 13 e5 ♜fd7 14 ♙e3 ♜e6 15 ♜e4 ♜xe5 16 ♜xe5 ♙xe5 17 c5 when White may have a tiny edge) 13...h6 14 ♙e3 (White could try 14 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 and then 15 ♜c2 or 15 f3) 14...♜xc4 15 ♜dx4 ♜xe4 16 ♜xe4 ♞xe4 17 ♞d8+ ♜h7 18 ♙d3 ♞e6 19 ♞e1 ♙f6 20 ♞f8 ♞e7 (not 20...♜g7 21 ♙xh6+!) 21 ♙d2 ♜g7 (worse is 21...♞xe1+ 22 ♙xe1 ♜g7 23 ♞e8 b6 24 ♙e4 ♙b7 25 ♞xa8 ♙xa8 26 b4 with an edge for White) 22 ♞e8 (or 22 ♞xe7 ♜xf8 with equality) 22...♞d7 and Black will play ...b6 with a drawish position.

c2) 10...h6!? is an interesting alternative: 11 ♙f4 (leading nowhere are 11 ♙e3 ♜xe4 12 ♜xe4 ♙xe5 and 11 ♙xf6

♙xf6 with ideas like ...♜a6-c5 and ...♙xc3+, while after 11 ♙h4 ♞e8 12 0-0-0 ♖a6 13 ♜f3 ♜xe4 14 ♜xe4 ♞xe4 15 ♞d8+ ♜h7 it is easy to evict the rook with ...♜c5-e6 or ...g5 and ...♙f6) 11...♜a6 12 ♙e2 ♜c5 13 f3 ♜h5 14 ♙h2 g5 15 ♞d1 ♙e6 16 ♜d3 ♜xd3+ 17 ♞xd3 ♜f4 18 ♙xf4 gxf4 and Black had play for the pawn in L.Keitlinghaus-R.Mainka, Dortmund 1990.

Returning to 9...♖a6:



10 ♜d5

Instead 10 ♜xe5?! just leads to problems after 10...♞e8 11 ♜d3 (11 f4 ♜h5!) 11...♜xe4 12 ♜xe4 ♞xe4+ 13 ♙e2 ♙f5 14 ♙e3 ♞d8 15 ♞d1 ♞xc4 and Black was just up a pawn in E.Grivas-V.Ivanchuk, Iraklion (blitz) 2004.

10...♞d6 11 ♙xf6

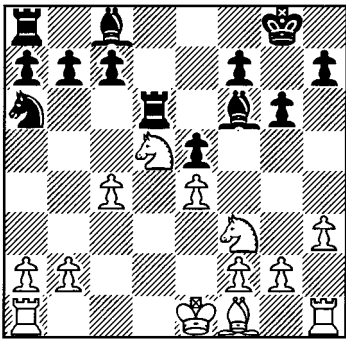
Instead 11 ♜d2 is not very dangerous after 11...c6 and then:

a) 12 ♜e7+ ♜h8 13 ♜xc8 ♞xc8 14 0-0-0 ♜c5 15 f3 ♜e6 16 ♙e3 c5 (or 16...♙f8!?) with equal chances in A.Urzica-A.Munteanu, Bucharest 1994.

b) 12 ♜xf6+ ♙xf6 13 ♙e3 (also harmless is 13 ♙xf6 ♞xf6 14 a3 c5 and

now after 15 ♖e2 b6 16 ♗b1 ♗d6 17 ♗c3, as in I.Bruch-M.Pokrupa, Schwabisch Gmuend 2001, Black could play 17...♗c7 with slightly the better chances due to his better bishop) 13...♗c7 (both 13...b6 and the solid 13...c5 are possible as well) 14 c5 ♗d8 15 0-0-0 ♗e6 with approximate equality in L.Vasilescu-D.Hristodorescu, Baile Tusnad 2000.

11...♖xf6



12 ♖c1

This is White's most ambitious plan. Alternatives are not so dangerous because Black often ends up with a better structure for the minor pieces that remain on the board. Variation 'a' reveals why 9...♗a6 is suddenly playable against 6 h3, whereas it was dubious against 6 ♖e2:

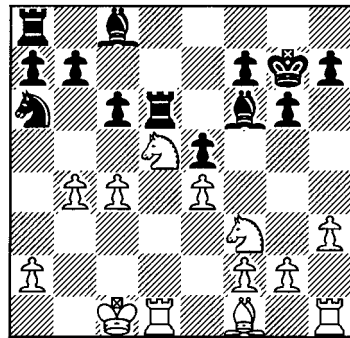
a) 12 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 13 0-0-0 (after 13 ♗xe5 ♗e6 14 f4?! f6 15 ♗g4, 15...♗xe4+ is check so there is no fork on f6 – this is the key difference!) 13...♗e6 14 ♗d8+ ♖g7 15 ♖e2 ♗e7 16 ♗hd1 b6 and Black's better bishop gave him the better chances in M.Molinaroli-I.Below, German League 1994.

b) 12 b4 looks premature: 12...c6 13 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 14 a3 c5! 15 b5 ♗c7 16 ♖e2 (or 16 ♗xe5 ♗e6) 16...♗e6 17 0-0-0 ♗e8 18 ♗he1 f6 19 ♗d6 ♖f7 20 ♗d2 ♖e7 21 ♗d3 ♗e6 and again Black had the advantage because of his better minor pieces in S.Skembris-L.Van Wely, Skei 1993.

c) 12 0-0-0 ♖g7 and now 13 ♖e2 ♖e6 is harmless, so White can try:

c1) 13 ♗d2 ♗d7!? (instead 13...c6 14 ♗xf6 ♗xd2? 15 ♗e8+ ♖f8 16 ♖xd2 ♖xe8 17 ♗xe5 leaves White a pawn up) 14 g4 c6 15 ♗xf6 ♖xf6 16 g5+ ♖e6 17 h4 ♗xd2 18 ♖xd2 ♖d6 was equal in L.Ljubojevic-H.Ree, Amsterdam 1981.

c2) 13 b4 c6 removes the intruder from d5.



Now 14 c5 (this leads to trouble, but Black had a familiar advantage after 14 ♗xf6 ♗xd1+ 15 ♖xd1 ♖xf6 16 a3 c5 17 b5 ♗c7 in D.Feofanov-E.Levin, Peterhof 2007) 14...♗xd5! (a very promising exchange sacrifice) 15 exd5 ♗xb4 16 d6 ♗xa2+ 17 ♖c2 ♖e6 18 ♗d2 (after 18 ♗e1 ♗b4+ 19 ♖d2 b6! 20 ♗xe5 bxc5 with the idea of ...♗d8xd6 is very good

for Black, as pointed out by Bojkov) 18...♖b4+ 19 ♖c1 ♗d5 20 h4 b6! 21 ♖h3 bxc5 22 ♖c4 e4 23 ♖d2 ♗d8 24 ♖a3 a6 25 f3 exf3 26 gxf3 ♗xh4 0-1 was A.Anastasian-V.Akopian, Yerevan 1996.

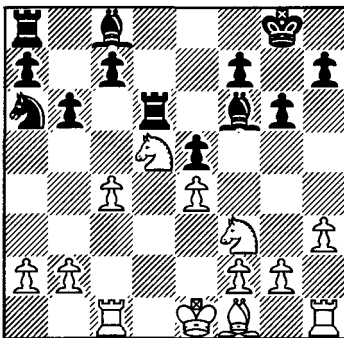
12...♗d8

This is ambitious – Black holds on to his bishop. There are alternatives:

a) 12...c6 13 c5 ♖xd5 (this may not be sufficient, but 13...♗e6 14 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 15 ♗xa6 bxa6 16 ♖e2 is obviously better for White) 14 exd5 cxd5 15 ♗xa6 bxa6 and Black has some, but possibly not enough compensation. White can also play Grivas's 13 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 14 c5 with a slight edge, as Black's rook is misplaced.

b) 12...c5 13 a3 ♗d8 14 ♗d3 is given as slightly better for White by Grivas, but this looks okay for Black to me. After 14...f6 15 ♖e2 ♖c7 16 ♖hd1 ♖e6 Black had no problems in N.Milchev-V.Biliskov, Zadar 2008.

c) 12...b6 looks very sensible. This was not mentioned by Grivas, even though he had faced it before (only in blitz, but it was against Ivanchuk!).

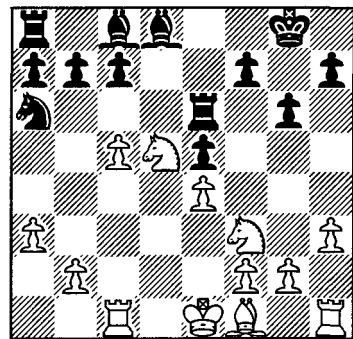


After 13 b4 ♗d8 14 c5 (White ran into problems after 14 a3 c6 15 ♖e3 f6 16 c5 bxc5 17 bxc5 ♗a5+ 18 ♖e2 ♗d8 in E.Grivas-V.Ivanchuk, Iraklion (blitz) 2004) 14...bxc5 15 bxc5 ♖c6 White has:

c1) 16 ♖xe5 ♖xc5 (Black is also fine after 16...♗e6 17 f4 f6 18 ♖g4 ♖xe4+ 19 ♖f2 ♖g7, as pointed out by Bojkov) 17 ♖d1 ♖xc1+ (or 17...♗g5!? 18 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 when 19 f4? fails to 19...♖xe4 – Bojkov) 18 ♖xc1 ♖c5 19 ♗c4 ♖xe4 20 ♖xf7 ♗e6 is level.

c2) 16 ♗c4 ♖xc5 17 0-0 c6 18 ♗xa6 ♖xc1 19 ♖xc1 ♗xa6 20 ♖xc6 and now rather than 20...♗d3 21 ♖c3! when Black had to be careful in P.Arnaudov-D.Bojkov, Blagoevgrad 2009, Black can play 20...♗b7 21 ♗d6 ♗xd5 22 ♖xd5 f6 with the idea of ...♗b6.

13 c5 ♗e6 14 a3



14...♖g7

Black can also play 14...c6 15 ♗xa6 (after 15 ♖e3 both 15...b6 and 15...b5!? are possible) 15...cxd5 (White was better after 15...bxa6 16 ♖e3 in P.Arnaudov-R.Urukalic, Zadar 2008, as Black's bishops were very passive) 16 ♗d3 and:

a) 16...dxe4 17 ♙xe4 ♜e7 18 0-0 f5 19 ♜fd1 ♙c7 20 ♙d5+ ♚g7 21 ♘d2 ♜b8 22 ♘c4 when White was perhaps a little better in E.Grivas-A.Tzermiadianos, Korinthos 1997. Black has the bishop-pair, but White is the better coordinated.

b) 16...♜e7 17 0-0 f5 (17...d4!? is also possible, while Bojkov suggests 17...♙d7!? when 18 exd5 e4 19 c6 bxc6 20 dxc6 exd3 21 cxd7 ♜xd7 is fine for Black) 18 ♜fd1 and now 18...♙d7?! 19 exd5 e4 was S.Kapnisis-V.Kotronias, Athens 2004. Here Grivas points out that 20 ♙c4! exf3 21 c6 is good for White. Black could improve with 18...♚f8!? 19 exd5 e4 20 d6 ♜g7 (after 20...♜d7 21 ♙e2 exf3 22 ♙xf3 White has good compensation for the piece) 21 ♙b5 (worse is 21 ♙e2?! exf3 22 ♙xf3 ♙e6!) 21...exf3 22 d7 ♙xd7 23 ♙xd7, although White is still a little better.

15 b4

Others:

a) 15 h4 looks rather pointless. After 15...c6 16 ♙xa6 cxd5 17 ♙d3 dxe4 18 ♙xe4 f5 19 ♙d5 ♜e7 Black is better off than in Grivas-Tzermiadianos above. Following 20 ♚e2?! e4 21 ♘d2 ♜e5 22 ♙a2 f4! Black already had the initiative in E.Grivas-Z.Ilincic, Varna 1994.

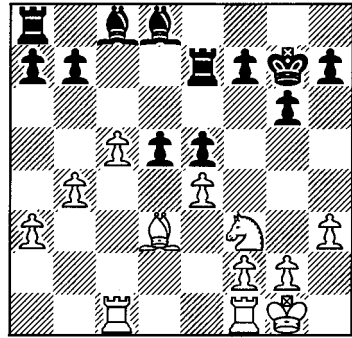
b) 15 ♘e3 ♘b8! (15...c6?! 16 ♙xa6 bxa6 is similar to Arnaudov-UrukaloVIC, above, but here Black has already committed to ...♚g7) 16 ♙c4 ♜e8 17 0-0 and Black's back-rank set-up looks passive, but he is very solid. After 17...f6 18 ♜fd1 c6 intending ...♘d7-f8-e6 and ...♙e7

Black has equal chances according to Bojkov.

15...c6

Black could consider 15...♘b8!? here as well.

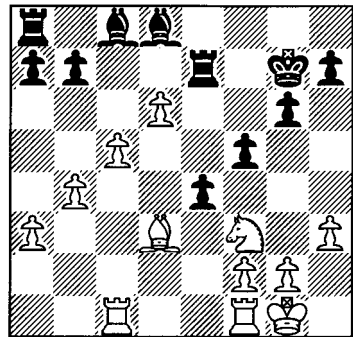
16 ♙xa6 cxd5 17 ♙d3 ♜e7 18 0-0



18...f5

This is similar to note 'b' to Black's 14th move, but here b4 and ...♚g7 have been thrown in. Instead 18...d4!? is still possible, while the simplest may be Bojkov's 18...dxe4 19 ♙xe4 f5 20 ♙d5 e4 21 ♘d4 ♜e5 22 ♙b3 ♙f6 with dynamic equality.

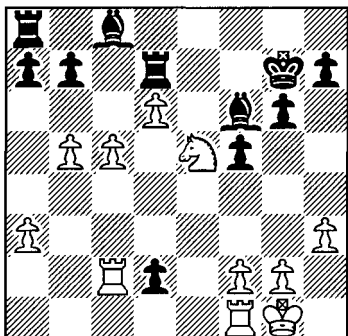
19 exd5 e4 20 d6



The position is very complicated.

20...♖f7?! 21 ♖c4 exf3 22 ♖xf7 ♜xf7 23 b5 is good, so Black should prefer:

a) 20...♗d7 hides the rook, but White gets chances too: 21 ♗e5 (21 ♖xe4 fxe4 22 ♗e5 ♖f6 23 ♗xd7 ♖xd7 24 ♖fe1 ♖c6 25 a4 a6 26 b5 axb5 27 axb5 ♖xb5 28 ♖xe4 ♖c6 is unclear) 21...exd3 22 b5 d2 23 ♖c2 ♖f6 (worse is 23...♖g5 24 h4! ♖xh4 25 ♖xd2) and here:



a1) 24 f4?! ♗d8 25 ♖xd2 ♖xe5 26 fxe5 ♖d7 27 e6 ♖xe6 28 c6 ♖ac8 29 ♖e1 ♜f7 30 d7 ♖c7 31 ♖de2 ♖xd7 32 ♖e7+ ♜f6 33 cxd7 ♖dxd7 and Black had a healthy extra pawn in V.Kukov-D.Bojkov, Blagoevgrad 2009.

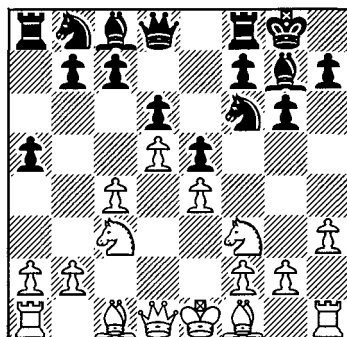
a2) 24 ♗xd7 ♖xd7 25 c6 ♖c8 26 c7 ♖xb5 27 ♖b1! ♖g5 (a better try is 27...♖d7 28 ♖xd2 b5 which is not so clear) 28 h4 ♖f4 29 g3 ♖xd6 30 ♖xd2 ♖xc7 31 ♖xb5 ♖xa3 32 ♖bd5 when White can press.

b) 20...♖e6!? returns some material, but allows Black to develop properly: 21 ♖c4 exf3 22 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 23 b5 ♖g5 and now 24 c6 ♖xc1 25 ♖xc1 bxc6 26 bxc6 fxc6 is better for Black, so White should prefer 24 ♖c2 ♖f4 which is unclear.

B) 7 d5

This is White's main continuation.

7...a5



This is the simplest answer to the Makogonov. Black plays along the lines of the Petrosian Variation 7 d5 a5 8 h3 and in fact play will often transpose. Here we will consider independent positions where White delays or omits ♖e2. Black's typical moves are ...♗a6, ...♖e8, ...♗d7! and then either ...♗dc5 or even ...♗b6!? depending on the circumstances. Once his pieces are properly repositioned the ...f5 break becomes a possibility, although Black should not automatically be in a hurry to play this move.

B1: 8 ♖e3

B2: 8 ♖g5

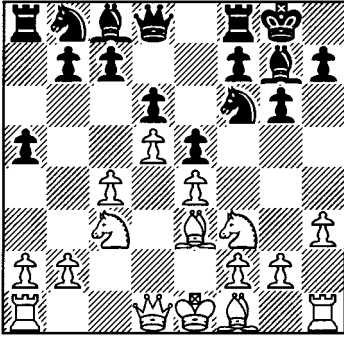
Instead 8 ♖e2 immediately transposes to the Petrosian, 8 g4 ♗a6 9 ♖e3 is covered under Line B1 and 8 ♖d3 ♗a6 9 ♖g5 is covered under Line B2.

B1) 8 ♖e3

M.Fierro Baquero, Jermuk 2010.

9...♖d7

Also possible is 9...♖h5, but we will stick with the plan used against the analogous line in the Petrosian Variation.



This is both less ambitious and less common than 8 ♖g5, but it is of course playable.

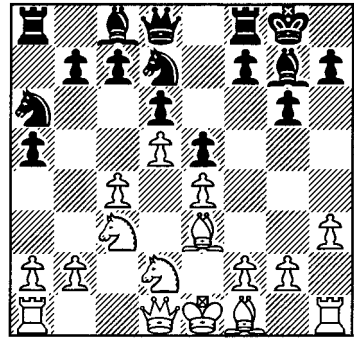
8...♖a6 9 ♖d2

Instead 9 ♖e2 is covered under the Petrosian line in Volume I. After 9 g4 Black can play 9...♖d7 because there is no pin and Black has saved a tempo on ...♖e8. This seems quite nice, but it is not so simple after 10 a3!? and here:

a) 10...♖ac5 11 b4! (after 11 ♖d2 Black has 11...♖f6!? intending ...♖g5, A.Riazantsev-E.Inarkiev, Novokuznetsk 2008) 11...axb4 12 axb4 ♖xa1 13 ♖xa1 ♖b3 14 ♖d1 ♖d4 15 ♖xd4 exd4 16 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♖e5 18 ♖e3 when Black's compensation is insufficient, as pointed out by Wells.

b) 10...f5?! looks premature: 11 gxf5 gxf5 12 exf5 ♖f6 13 ♖c2 c6? 14 ♖g5 and White was already winning in L.Mkrtchian-M.Fierro, Nanjing 2009.

c) 10...♖b6!? is the right idea: 11 ♖e2 ♖d7 12 ♖d2 (or 12 ♖c2 ♖c5) 12...♖f6! (again with the idea of ...♖g5) 13 ♖f3 ♖c5!? 14 g5 ♖g7 15 ♖c2 a4 16 ♖d2 f5 with counterplay in L.Mkrtchian-



10 g4

Other moves are not dangerous:

a) 10 a3 f5 11 f3 allows a typical trick with 11...♖h6!

b) 10 ♖d3 f5 11 f3 ♖h4+ (or 11...♖h6) 12 ♖f2 ♖g5 13 ♖g1 ♖dc5 14 ♖b1 ♖h6 gave Black good play in Y.Dokhoian-A.Lesiege, Philadelphia 1989.

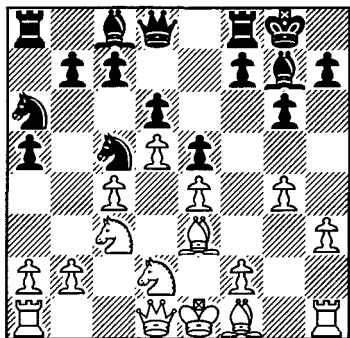
c) 10 ♖b3 ♖ac5 11 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 12 ♖d3 f5 was prematurely drawn in E.Magerramov-F.El Taher, Dubai 1999. Black certainly has no problems here.

10...♖dc5

This is consistent with Black's typical plans. Also quite playable is 10...f5 and then:

a) 11 ♖b3 b6 (or 11...f4) 12 ♖g1 f4 13 ♖d2 ♖f6 14 ♖f3 ♖dc5 15 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 16 b3 ♖d7 and Black had a good game in Z.Rahman-E.Hossain, Dhaka 2006.

b) 11 gxf5 gxf5 12 exf5 ♖dc5 13 ♗de4 ♙xf5 14 ♗xc5 (14 ♙g2 ♚e8 15 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 was M.Muse-V.Bologan, German League 1998, and here Bologan points out 15...♚g6!) 14...♗xc5 15 ♚d2 ♚h4 16 ♙g1 ♗h8 17 0-0-0 ♙f6 18 ♙e2 ♙g8 was fine for Black in M.Roeder-N.Ortiz Aguirre, Balaguer 2006.



Black's pieces are well placed and now ...f5 is a definite possibility.

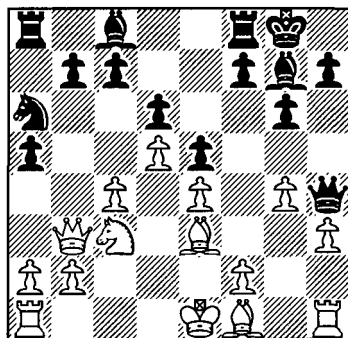
11 ♗b3

Other moves are very committal:

a) 11 h4 f5 12 gxf5 (12 g5 f4 13 ♙xc5 ♗xc5 is fine for Black) 12...gxf5 13 ♚e2 f4 14 ♙xc5 f3!? (Black avoids 14...♗xc5 15 ♙h3, but even this is not so clear) 15 ♚e3 ♗xc5 16 ♗xf3 ♙f4 with good compensation for the pawn in A.Borisenko-I.Zakharevich, Novgorod 1995.

b) 11 g5 f5 12 h4 ♙d7 13 h5 ♙f7 14 ♙h4 and now Black played 14...c6!? and held his much higher-rated opponent in D.Andreikin-I.Cabezas Ayala, Kallithea 2008. A good alternative would be 14...f4 15 ♙xc5 ♗xc5 when White will have to mind his g5-pawn.

11...♗xb3 12 ♚xb3 ♚h4!



13 ♙g1

Instead Shirov recommended White play 13 ♚d1 ♙h6 14 ♚d2, but this runs into 14...♙xe3 15 ♚xe3 ♙xg4!

13...♙h6 14 g5 ♙g7 15 0-0-0 f5 16 gxf6?!

Black already has the initiative, but this runs into a clever retort. Instead 16 exf5 gives Black a choice:

a) 16...gxf5 17 f3 f4 18 ♙d2 ♚f2 19 ♙g2?! (a better try is 19 ♙d3 ♚xf3 20 ♚c2) 19...♗c5 20 ♚c2 ♙f5 21 ♗e4 ♚e2! is good for Black.

b) 16...♙xf5 17 ♚xb7 ♙d7 18 ♚b3 (after 18 ♙a7 ♙xa7! 19 ♚xa7 ♗c5 with the idea of ...♚xf2 Black has a strong initiative) 18...♙xf2 19 ♙xf2 ♚xf2 when Black is clearly better according to Shirov. If 20 ♗e2 e4!.

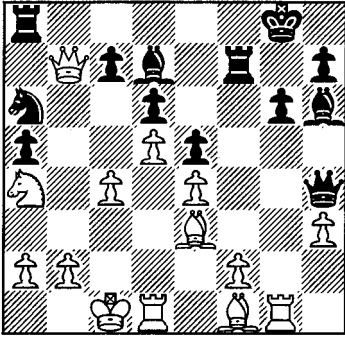
16...♙h6! 17 ♗a4

White tries to at least prevent ...♗c5. Black has the much better endgame after 17 ♗b5 ♙xf6 18 ♙xh6 ♚xh6+ 19 ♚e3 ♚xe3+ 20 fxe3 ♙d7 and the mid-dlegame arising from 17 ♙xh6 ♚xh6+ 18 ♙d2 ♙xf6 19 ♗d1 ♗c5 20 ♚c2 ♙d7 also greatly favours him.

17...♙d7!

Black could also play 17...♞xf6, but Shirov points out that White can at least stir up a little trouble with 18 c5!?

18 f7+ ♞xf7 19 ♖xb7



19...♙xa4! 20 ♖xa8+ ♞xf8 21 ♖xf8+

Also losing is 21 ♖xa6 ♞xf2! 22 ♙d3 ♙xe3+ 23 ♖b1 ♞b8 24 b3 ♙xb3.

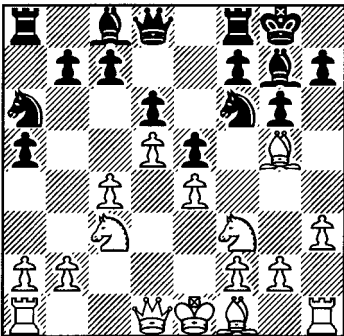
21...♙xf8 22 ♙xh6+ ♞xh6+ 23 ♞d2 ♘b4

0-1 P.San Segundo Carrillo-A.Shirov, Madrid 1997.

B2) 8 ♙g5

This is the main move, as it is in the Petrosian Variation.

8...♘a6



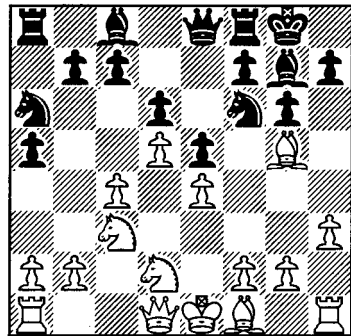
Black avoids creating any weaknesses with ...h6 and will play the same scheme as in the 8 h3 Petrosian from Volume I.

9 ♘d2

Instead 9 g4 ♖e8 10 ♘d2 quickly transposes, while 10 ♙e2 as usual reaches the Petrosian Variation. White can also play 9 ♙d3, but this should not worry Black, who can continue with his standard schemes. After 9...♖e8 10 g4 ♘d7 11 ♞g1 (or 11 a3 ♘dc5 12 ♙c2 ♙d7) 11...♘dc5 (also good is the typical reaction 11...♙h8) 12 ♙c2 ♙d7 Black is fine and ...♘b4 is always in the air.

9...♖e8

Black breaks the pin without weakening his kingside. I do not like 9...h6 so much, although Grivas says that 'Black cannot really do without this move'. This is odd because 9...♖e8 is the most popular (and in my opinion, best) move in the position! Black can also play 9...c6, which is the second most popular choice.

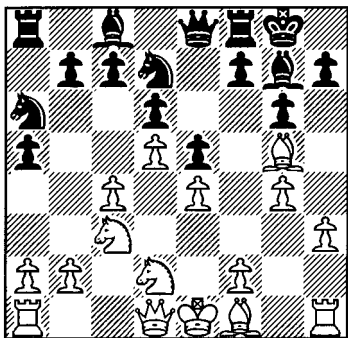


10 g4

This is White's independent try. 10

♙e2 (which is recommended by Markos) 10...♘d7 is the main line of the 8 h3 Petrosian Variation.

10...♘d7



11 a3

11 ♙e2 is again the Petrosian Variation, while 11 h4 ♘dc5 12 h5 is well met by 12...♗b4!. White sometimes plays 11 ♖g1 ♘dc5!? (11...♖h8 is also good; this is a typical reaction to ♖g1, and after 12 ♙e2 ♘dc5 both 13 a3 and 13 ♘f1 were covered under the Petrosian Variation in Volume 1), and now 12 a3 can be met by 12...♙d7 or 12...a4, while 12 ♘b3 ♘xb3 13 ♗xb3 (or 13 axb3 b6) 13...♘c5 with the idea of ...♙d7 gives Black equal chances.

11...♘b6

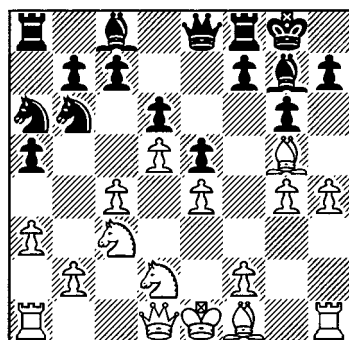
Again we see this unusual-looking move. Instead 11...♘dc5? runs into 12 b4 because of the pin along the a-file, while 11...f5?! 12 gxf5 gxf5 13 ♖g1! ♖h8 14 exf5 e4 15 ♙e3 ♘e5 (Black is also much worse after 15...♘ac5 16 ♘b5 ♗d8 17 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 18 ♖xg7! ♖xg7 19 ♗g4+ ♖h8 20 ♗xe4) 16 ♘dx4 ♙xf5 17 ♙e2 left Black without enough play for

the pawn in P.Nielsen-E.Mortensen, Horsens 2003.

12 h4!?

This is critical. White uses the tempo saved on ♙e2 to advance on the king-side. For the last time, 12 ♙e2 ♙d7 is the Petrosian Variation, while 12 ♙d3 ♘c5 13 ♙c2 a4 is Bologan's suggestion.

White can also play the typical move 12 ♖g1. Then 12...♖h8 (12...♙d7 is also possible) 13 ♙d3! f5 (Black should probably consider 13...♙d7 or 13...♘c5 14 ♙c2 ♙d7) 14 ♙e3 (14 gxf5 gxf5 15 ♙c2!?) 14...♘xd5! (14...f4 15 ♙xb6 cxb6 is unclear) 15 exd5 (if 15 cxd5 f4) 15...e4 (Bologan prefers 15...f4 16 ♘de4 fxe3 17 fxe3 ♗e7 when White has the e4-square, but Black has the bishops and remains solid) 16 ♘dx4 fxe4 17 ♘xe4 ♙xb2 18 ♖a2 ♙g7 19 ♖e2 ♙d7 led to an unusual position in T.Haimovich-A.Fedorov, Kemer 2007.



12...♘c5

This is natural, but it may not be Black's best. There are a couple of alternatives:

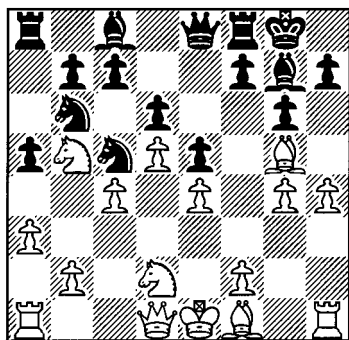
a) 12...f5 is Bologan's recommenda-

tion. He gives 13 gxf5 gxf5 14 ♖g1 ♗h8 15 h5 ♘c5 16 ♙e3 ♘ba4 17 ♘b5 ♚e7 with counterplay.

b) 12...♙d7 13 h5 ♘a4 (another idea is 13...♘c5 intending 14 ♘b5 ♚b8!) 14 ♘xa4 ♙xa4 15 ♚f3 (after 15 b3 ♙d7 16 ♙e3 ♚e7 17 g5 ♘c5 the position is unclear; if 18 h6 ♙h8 with the idea of ...f6) 15...♙d7 16 ♙e3 f5 (16...♚e7 is safer) 17 gxf5 gxf5 18 h6 f4 19 hxg7 (19 ♖g1 ♚f7) 19...♚f7 20 ♙h3 fxe3 21 ♚xe3 ♖xg7 22 0-0-0 ♙xh3 23 ♖xh3 ♚f7 with unclear play in O.Almeida-F.De la Paz, Cuba Championship 2003.

13 ♘b5

Bologan suggests White should play 13 h5 ♘ba4 14 ♘xa4 (14 ♘b5 ♚d7 15 b3 ♘b6 16 ♚f3 c6 is okay for Black) 14...♚xa4 15 b3 ♚d7 (to stop ♚f3-h3) 16 ♙e2 with an edge, as it is not easy for Black to coordinate his pieces.



13...♚d7

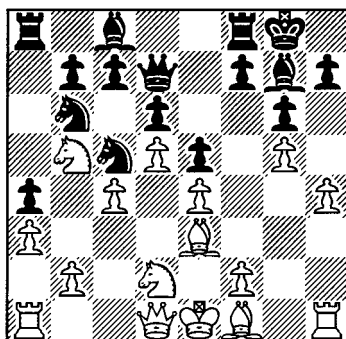
This defends the c7-pawn while attacking g4, but Black could consider 13...f6 14 ♙e3 (if 14 ♘xc7 ♚f7! 15 ♘xa8 fxc5 and f2 is under attack) 14...♚d8 (with the idea of ...c6) 15 ♙xc5 dxc5 16

h5 ♙d7 with the idea of ...♘c8.

14 ♙e3 a4!?

After 14...c6 15 ♘c3 cxd5 (not 15...♚xg4? 16 ♙e2 ♚d7 17 b4) 16 cxd5 (if 16 exd5 Black can play 16...♘ba4 or 16...e4!? 17 ♘cxe4 ♘xe4 18 ♘xe4 ♘a4 with counterplay) 16...♚xg4 17 ♙e2?! ♚d7 18 b4 ♘ca4 White has little to show for the pawn, but better is 17 ♘b5 ♚d7 18 ♚c2 with the idea of ♘xd6 which seems to favour White.

15 g5

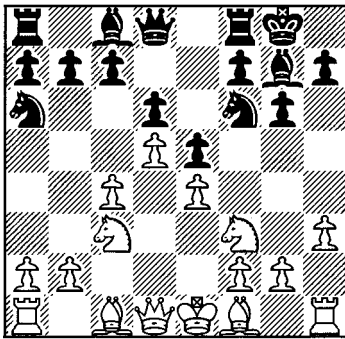


Now 15...f5 16 gxf6 ♙xf6 17 h5 g5 18 ♙h3 ♚e7 19 ♙xc8 ♖axc8 20 ♙xc5 dxc5 21 ♚e2 (21 ♚g4 would stop Black's somewhat desperate bid for counterplay) 21...g4!? 22 ♚xg4+ ♗h8 23 0-0-0 ♙g5 24 ♚e2 ♚f6 25 ♖hg1 ♙h6 26 ♖g2 favoured White in M.Krylov-A.Fedorov, St Petersburg 2009. Instead Black could have played 15...♚e7 16 h5 c6 17 ♘c3 cxd5 18 cxd5 (or 18 exd5 e4) 18...♙d7 with the idea of ...♚fc8 with counterplay.

c) 7 d5 ♘a6

Here Black tries to save a tempo by

omitting the prophylactic advance ...a5. This tempo could help him create counterplay more quickly, but there is also some danger that the knight might become sidelined on a6. This line is kind of an in-between of Lines B and D. There are some similar plans to Line B with ...♖e8 and ...♗d7-c5, while if Black plays a quick ...♗h5 the play is similar to Line D and the two may even transpose.



C1: 8 ♖e3

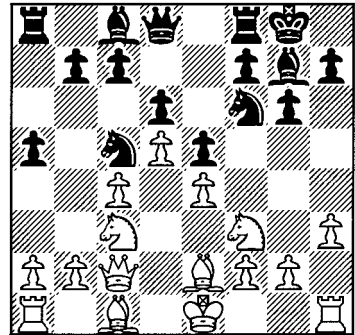
C2: 8 ♖g5

There are some other moves to consider as well:

a) 8 g4 should be met with the immediate 8...♗c5 9 ♖c2 a5. After 10 ♖e3 (or 10 ♖g5 c6!? when Black intends ...♗d7, ...a4, and ...♖c7/b6/a5) 10...♗e8 (or 10...c6) 11 ♖g1 and although 11...♗h8 12 0-0-0 f5 13 gxf5 gxf5 14 h4 ♗a6 15 a3 f4 16 ♗d2 ♗f6 gave Black a playable position in T.Radjabov-A.Morozevich, Monte Carlo (rapid) 2007, I prefer 11...♗d7!? 12 0-0-0 a4 with an interesting middlegame.

b) 8 ♖d3 ♗c5 (8...♗h5!?) 9 ♖c2 a5 10 ♖g5 (instead 10 ♖e3 can be met with 10...♗h5, while 10 g4 c6! scores very well for Black) 10...c6 (10...h6!? 11 ♖e3 ♗h5 is also possible) 11 ♖d2 cxd5 12 cxd5 ♖d7 13 a4 ♖b6 14 0-0 ♖fc8 15 ♖fe1 ♗b3 16 ♖xb3 ♖xb3 17 ♖a3 ♖b4 was fine for Black in E.Bareev-P.Svidler, Elista 1997.

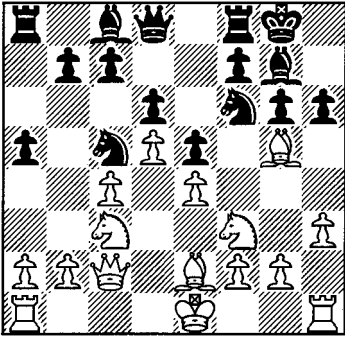
c) 8 ♖e2 ♗c5 9 ♖c2 a5 and here:



c1) 10 g4 c6 11 ♖e3 was actually covered in Volume I. This position is rather obscure, so I will repeat it here: 11...a4 (better than 11...cxd5 12 cxd5 when b5 is weak) 12 0-0-0 (White cannot even take a pawn because 12 ♖xc5 dxc5 13 ♗xa4 runs into 13...♗xe4!) 12...cxd5 13 cxd5 ♖a5 14 ♗d2 ♖d7 15 g5 (this runs into a great shot, but after the continuation 15 ♗c4 ♖c7 Black threatens ...b5 when 16 ♗a3 can be met by 16...♗cxe4 17 ♗xe4 ♖xc2+ and 18...♗xe4 with an extra pawn) 15...♗fxe4! 16 ♗dxe4 (16 ♗cxe4 ♗xe4 17 ♗c4 ♖b4 18 ♖xe4 ♖fc8 19 ♖d2 ♖c5 20 ♖e3 and here instead of repeating moves with 20...♖b4, Black can play 20...♖b5! with the idea of ...♖f5)

16...dxe4 17 ♖xe4 (17 dxe4 loses to the reply 17...♗fc8 18 dxc3 a3!) 17...♙f5 18 ♗h4 ♗fc8 19 ♘d2 ♗xc3! 20 bxc3 ♗xd5+ and Black had a winning attack in L.Yurtaev-Y.Shulman, Vladivostok 1995.

c2) 10 ♙g5 h6

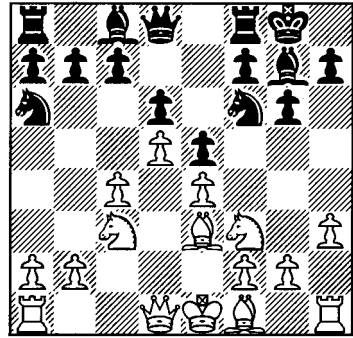


11 ♙e3 (11 ♙h4 ♙d7 with the idea of ...♗e8 and ...d7h7 is like a normal Petrosian with White's h3 looking strange) 11...d7h5 12 g3 f5 when it is not easy for White to exploit the inclusion of ...h6: for example, 13 d7h4 d7f4! 14 ♙xf4 exf4 15 d7xg6 fxg3 16 d7xf8 gxf2+ 17 ♘f1 (or 17 ♘xf2 ♙xc3 18 bxc3 d7xe4+ 19 ♘f1 ♗h4 with an attack) 17...♗xf8 and Black had more than enough for the exchange in A.Huss-J.Van de Mortel, Biel 1996.

c3) 10 ♙e3 d7h5 11 g3 f5 12 d7d2 (12 exf5 ♙xf5 13 ♗d1 e4 14 d7d4 ♙d7 15 d7b3 b6 16 ♗d2 ♗e7 was fine for Black in L.Cyborowski-R.Kempinski, Opole 2007) 12...d7f6 13 0-0-0 b6 14 ♗dg1 and now 14...f4 15 ♙xc5 bxc5 16 g4! with the idea of g5 and ♙g4 was better for White in F.Vallejo Pons-T.Radjabov, Spanish Team Championship 2005. I would prefer 14...♙d7 15 g4 d7fxe4 16

d7dxe4 d7xe4 17 d7xe4 fxe4 18 h4 (18 ♗xe4 ♗h4) 18...♗f4!? with interesting play.

C1) 8 ♙e3



This is not critical, but as it can also arise via Line D, we will consider it in detail.

8...d5

Another way of playing is 8...d5 9 d7d2 a5.

9 d7d2

It looks like White is playing too many pawn moves after 9 a3 f5 10 b4, but it is not so bad. That said, Black has done well with both 10...d7h8 and 10...d7b8!? intending ...a5. Instead 9 d7h2 ♗e8 10 ♙e2 d7f4 11 ♙f3 f5 is covered under Line D in the note to White's 11th move, while the extravagant 9 d7g1 ♗e8 10 ♙e2 can be met by 10...d7f4 or even 10...f5 11 exf5 (after 11 ♙xh5 gxh5 Black's development lead and bishop-pair give him good counterplay) 11...d7f4 12 ♙xf4 exf4 13 fxg6 ♗xg6 14 ♘f1 d7c5 with compensation for the pawn.

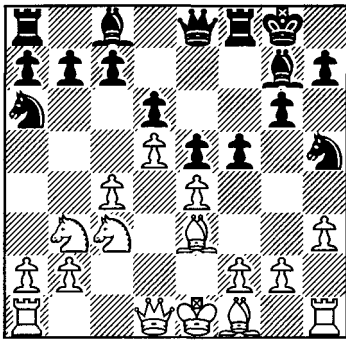
9...♗e8

A familiar idea. Black's queen keeps an eye on the h5-knight in preparation for ...f5.

10 ♖b3

This looks a little awkward, but White is playing against the a6-knight and for a quick c5 break. Instead 10 ♖e2 ♘f4 is fine for Black, while 10 g3 f5 11 exf5 gxf5 12 ♖e2 ♘f6 is typically unclear.

10...f5



11 c5

This is very ambitious as White is not well developed.

11...f4 12 ♖d2 ♘xc5 13 ♘xc5 dxc5 14 b4

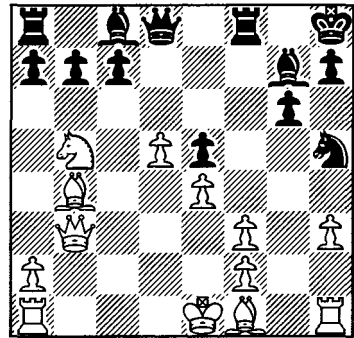
After 14 ♖e2 Black has played 14...♗f6 a few times, but it is hard to believe in White's concept after 14...♘f6 15 b4 cxb4 16 ♘b5 ♗f7 when the e4-pawn is hanging and Black can continue with ...♗d8 and ...♖f8.

14...f3!?

This is an interesting disruptive move. White seems to generate enough play after 14...cxb4 15 ♘b5 or 14...♗e7 15 bxc5 ♗xc5 16 ♗c1.

15 gxf3 cxb4 16 ♘b5 ♗d8! 17 ♗b3 ♖h8

18 ♖xb4



18...a6!?

Black continues to fight for the initiative even at the cost of material.

19 ♖xf8

Bad is 19 ♘c3 ♗xf3 and Black is also better after 19 ♘a3 ♗f7.

19...♖xf8

Black's dark-square play gives him good compensation for the exchange. White's king has no comfortable haven.

20 ♘c3 ♗f6

Also playable is 20...♖c5, as in A.Barsov-S.Bekker Jensen, London 1999.

21 ♘e2 a5 22 a3 ♖c5 23 ♘g3 ♘f4 24 ♘e2 ♘h5 25 ♘g3 ♘f4 26 ♘e2

Here in Wang Yue-Ding Liren, Shenzhen 2010, White was happy to accept a repetition despite his near 200-point rating advantage.

C2) 8 ♖g5

This is White's main choice, just as it was against 7...a5.

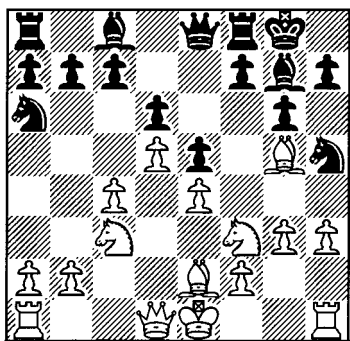
8...♗e8

Again we avoid the weakening 8...h6.

9 g4

White gains nothing from 9 ♗d2 ♗h5: for example, 10 g3 (worse is 10 g4?! ♗f4 11 ♖f3 f5 12 gxf5 gxf5 13 ♙xf4 fxe4 14 ♗dx4 ♖xf4 15 ♖g3 ♗b4 and Black had the initiative in A.Lenderman-E.Liu, Milwaukee 2009, because 16 0-0-0? fails to 16...♗xa2+) 10...f5 11 exf5 gxf5 12 ♙e2 ♗f6 with a good position for Black. After the overambitious 13 g4?! ♖g6 Black quickly took over in E.Atalik-O.Sabirova, Turin Olympiad 2006.

9 ♙e2 ♗h5 10 g3 is important, however.



This position usually comes about after 6...♗a6 7 ♙g5 ♖e8 8 ♙e2 e5 9 d5 ♗h5, as in this case White may hesitate to play 8 g4 because of 8...c5!?. Now Black has two moves:

a) 10...f5 11 exf5 gxf5 12 ♗h4 (not 12 ♗xe5? ♖xe5 when the e2-bishop is pinned) 12...♗f6 13 ♖c2 (if 13 g4 f4!) 13...♗b4 14 ♖b3 a5 15 a3 ♗a6 16 ♖c2 ♗c5 17 ♙e3 (White must avoid 17 ♗xf5? ♙xf5 18 ♖xf5 ♗fe4) 17...b6 18 0-0-0 a4 19 ♗b1 and now rather than 19...♖b8?! 20 ♗b5 ♖b7 21 g4!, as in

G.Kacheishvili-I.Smirin, Minneapolis 2005, Avrukh recommends 19...♗b3 with unclear play.

b) 10...f6 is cleverer:

b1) 11 ♙e3 f5 12 exf5 gxf5 13 ♗h4 ♗f6 14 ♖c2 f4! gives Black good play.

b2) 11 g4 f5 12 gxf5 gxf5 (simpler is 12...h6 13 hxg6 ♖xg6 when Black is obviously better) 13 ♗xg5 ♖e7 14 ♖g1 ♖f6 15 ♖g2 ♗h8 16 ♙xh5 ♙h6 17 h4 ♗c5 gives Black active play, and after 18 b4 ♖f4! he took over in Z.Gyimesi-A.Shirov, Moscow 2001. If 19 bxc5 ♖xh4.

b3) 11 ♙d2 f5 12 ♗h4 (12 exf5 e4! gives Black the initiative: for example, 13 ♗g5 e3! 14 ♙xe3 ♗xg3!) 12...♗f6 13 exf5 gxf5 14 ♖c2 e4?! 15 ♙e3 was favourable for White in M.Mchedlishvili-B.Avrukh, Beersheba 2005, but instead 14...♗b4 15 ♖b3 a5 16 a3 ♗a6 17 ♖c2 ♗c5 18 ♙e3 b6 would transpose to variation 'a' above.

9...♗d7

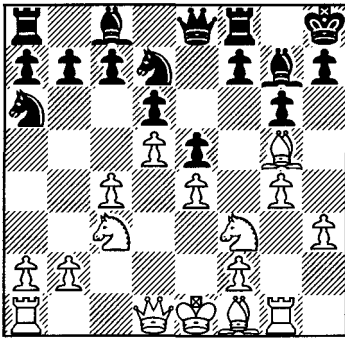
Black continues along the same lines as he did in Line B. Instead 9...♗c5 10 ♗d2 a5 is possible, but then it is not easy to create counterplay. Black could play ...c6, but generally this does not mix well with ...♖e8. After 11 ♙e2 ♗fd7, 12 ♗b5 is annoying.

10 ♖g1

Instead 10 ♙e2 ♗dc5 11 ♖g1 ♗h8 transposes to the main line.

10...♗h8

The typical reaction to ♖g1. Black wants to have the option of playing ...f5 without having his king opposite the white rook.



11 e2

White plays a noncommittal development move. This was the choice of Grivas, but there are some other ideas Black should be ready for:

a) 11 a3 f5 12 gxf5 gxf5 and now 13 exf5 e4! gives Black counterplay, so White should prefer:

a1) With 13 b4 White plays against the a6-knight. Markos credits this idea to Laznicka, but Krasenkov played it as far back as 2001. I would recommend 13...f6 14 e3 d3 b8!? or 13...fxe4 14 dxe4 f6. White may have an edge here, but having expanded across the whole board, his position is not so easy to play.

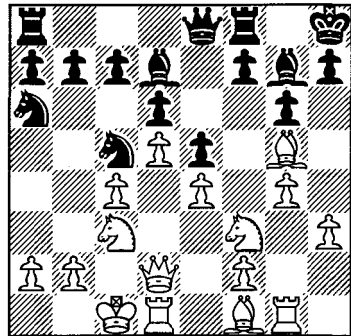
a2) 13 e3 dxc5 14 c2 fxe4 15 g5 d3+ (after 15...h5 16 e2 h4 17 cxe4 dxe4 18 xe4 xe4 19 dxe4 xh3 20 b4 White has some compensation according to Markos) 16 xd3 exd3 17 xd3 f5 18 e2 and Markos prefers White here, but after 18...b6 19 0-0-0 (or 19 b4 e4) 19...c5 20 xc5 bxc5 21 ge4 b8 the position is unclear.

b) 11 d2 is the main recommendation of Markos. Now 11...dc5 and then:

b1) 12 e2 f5 13 gxf5 gxf5 14 e6 looks risky, but Markos suggests that after 12...a4 White has nothing better than to repeat moves with 13 b5 d4c5. Black could also simply play 12...d7.

b2) 12 h4 is directed against ...f5: 12...d7 (another Markos idea is 12...g8!? 13 f3 f8! with the idea of ...e7 and after 14 e3 e7 15 g5 f5 Black has counterplay) 13 f3 a4 14 b5 (14 xa4 xa4 15 b3 d7 16 b4 g8! again intends ...f8-e7) 14...b6 15 a4 xb5 16 axb5 c5 17 a3 a5! and Black certainly has no problems according to Markos.

b3) 12 0-0-0 d7 and now:



b31) 13 e2? runs into 13...a4! 14 de1 b4 15 b1 c2+.

b32) 13 h4 a4! is an idea borrowed from the Sämisch. After 14 h5 (instead 14 b3 runs into 14...xb3; if 14 xa4 xa4 White has problems with e4 and a2; and 14 e1 b4 15 b5 a5! 16 xc7 d7 17 xa8 xa8 with a win-

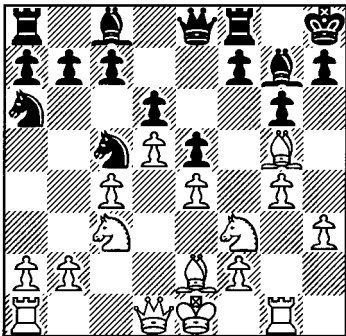
wing attack for Black is given by Markos; 18 ♖b1 ♙b3!) 14...♙xd1 15 ♚xd1, although White has a degree of compensation for the exchange, Black should not be worse.

b33) 13 ♖b1! is a sensible prophylactic move. Now:

b331) 13...f5 14 gxf5 gxf5 15 ♘h4 (instead 15 ♙h6 ♙xh6 16 ♚xh6 ♚f7 17 ♘h4 ♙g8 18 ♙e2 fxe4 is unclear) 15...♗xe4 16 ♗xe4 fxe4 17 ♙h6 ♙g8 18 ♙xg7+ ♙xg7 19 ♙xg7 ♖xg7 20 ♚g5+ ♗f8 21 ♚h6+ ♖e7 and here Markos suggests 22 ♙d3, but instead 22 ♚xh7+! looks crushing.

b332) 13...f6 14 ♙e3 f5 (14...♙g8!?) has been played a few times as well) 15 gxf5 gxf5 and now ♘h4 is not possible, while 16 ♙h6 transposes to 15 ♙h6 in the last variation.

b333) 13...♗a4 is sensible. After 14 ♗xa4 ♙xa4 15 b3 ♙d7 16 b4 (else Black will play ...♗c5 with an easy game) 16...b5 Black is fine according to Markos. 11...♗dc5



12 a3

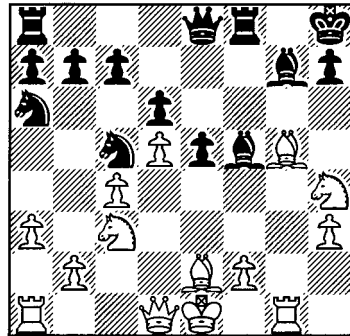
This is critical. Instead 12 ♚d2 trans-

poses to note 'b' to White's 11th move, while 12 ♘d2 can be met immediately by 12...f5 and 12 ♘h4 ♙d7 (or even 12...♙g8!?) looks fine for Black.

12...f5 13 gxf5

Instead 13 b4 is consistent, but White is making a lot of pawn moves. After 13...♗xe4 14 ♗xe4 fxe4 15 ♘d2 ♗b8! 16 ♗xe4 a5 Black had sufficient play in V.Kosyrev-A.Kovalev, Minsk 2000. Playing 13 ♘d2 does not look consistent with g4 and ♙g1, however, and Avrukh points out that 13...h6! is well timed here. After 14 ♙e3 (or 14 ♙h4 fxe4 15 ♗dx4 ♗xe4 16 ♗xe4 ♗c5 17 ♗xc5 dxc5 18 ♚c2 e4 with counterplay) 14...f4 15 ♙xc5 Avrukh suggests 15...dxc5 16 ♙b1 (16 h4 looks more testing) 16...♚e7, but I would prefer 15...♗xc5!? 16 b4 ♘d7 with ideas like ...a5 and ...♙f6 when I like Black.

13...gxf5 14 exf5 ♙xf5 15 ♘h4



This has scored very well for White, but I think Black has adequate resources.

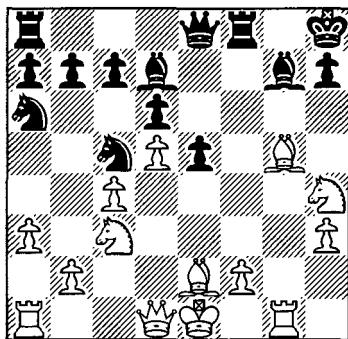
15...♙d7!?

It looks correct to keep the bishop

and now White's knight remains off-side. Other moves have led Black into trouble:

a) 15...e4 16 dxf5 xf5 17 e3 we5 18 d2 af8 (a better idea is 18... d3 intending 19 exd3 exd3 20 wg4 dc5) 19 gg2 ! preparing to double rooks on the g-file was good for White in V.Lazarev-V.Nevednichy, Saint Vincent 2000.

b) 15... wf7 16 e3 (16 dxf5 xf5 17 e3 also looks good for White) 16...e4 17 dxf5 xf5 18 d2 ! similarly favoured White in A.Poluljahov-G.Timoshenko, Koszalin 1999. If 18... d3 19 exd3 exd3 20 wg4 with a big advantage.

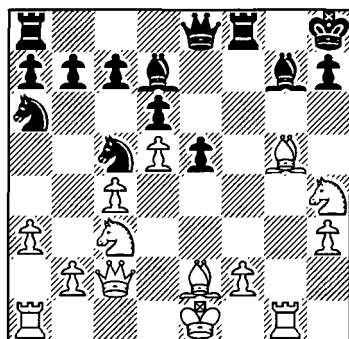


16 wc2

Instead 16 b4? e4 is bad, but the sharp 16 eh5 !? d3+ 17 d2 dxb2 18 we2 is critical and has been seen in some correspondence games. Black has:

a) 18... xf2 19 wf2 wxh5 20 de4 exh3 (or 20... xc4+ 21 e1 with the idea ef6 , winning) 21 c2 xc4 22 ef6 1-0 was M.Rey-C.Parra, correspondence 2004.

b) 18... xc4+ 19 e1 e4 20 exe8 xc3+ 21 d1 exe8 (instead 21... axe8 22 wh5 and 1-0 in R.Woelk-J.Pineda, correspondence 2008, even though 22... de5 still looks messy!) 22 a2 (if 22 xc4 exa1) is very messy, although admittedly White has scored well in correspondence games.



16... wf7

Conversely, this has scored well for Black in correspondence play. Grivas only gives 16...e4 17 0-0-0 and now:

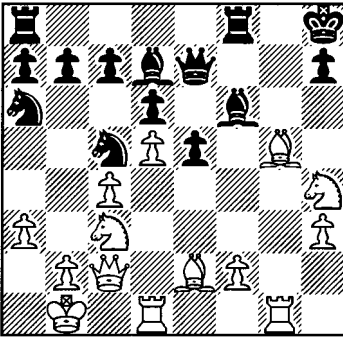
a) 17... ea4 18 dxa4 dxa4 19 e3 ef6 20 d4 ! (better than 20 ed4 exd4 21 exd4 dc5 with good play for Black in D.Tyomkin-R.Ramesh, Andorra 2000) was J.Ivanov-J.Sande Edreira, Ortigueira 2002. If 20... exh4 21 exe4 wd8 22 exh4 wxh4 23 gg4 with the idea of ed4 is winning for White.

b) 17... xf2 was queried by Grivas, but 18 e3 d3+ ! 19 exd3 exd3 20 wxd3 dc5 (or 20... wf7 !?) 21 exc5 exe2 22 dxe2 dxc5 is not so clear.

17 0-0-0 ef6 18 eb1 we7

With active pieces and a good structure, Black has scored very well from

this position. Some practical examples:

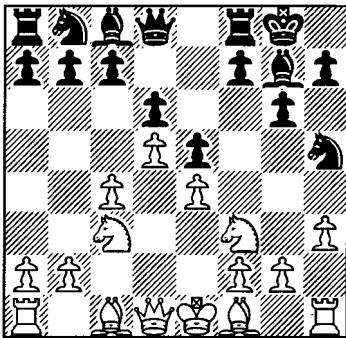


a) 19 $f4$ $exf4$ 20 $d3$ $\text{d}xg5$ 21 $\text{b}xg5$ $\text{c}f6$ 22 $\text{c}a2$ $\text{d}f5$ 23 $\text{c}c1$ $\text{b}ae8$ with the initiative in E.Bortnik-W.Gonet, correspondence 2004.

b) 19 $d3$ $\text{d}xg5$ 20 $d3$ $\text{d}xg5$ $\text{d}f5$ 21 $\text{d}ge4$ $d3$ $ex4$ 22 $d3$ $ex4$ $d3$ 23 $\text{d}d3$ $d3$ $xd3$ 24 $\text{c}xd3$ $\text{d}xe4$ 25 $\text{c}xe4$ $\text{b}xf2$ with an extra pawn in J.Romero Sanchez-J.Olano Aizpurua, correspondence 2008.

c) 19 $\text{c}d2$ $\text{d}xg5$ 20 $\text{b}xg5$ $\text{b}f4$ 21 $d3$ $\text{c}f6$ 22 $\text{b}g3$ $d3$ 23 $\text{c}e3$ $d3$ and Black was better in M.Pangrazzi-J.Barrios Troncoso, correspondence 2003.

D) 7 $d5$ $d3$!



This aggressive move gives the Makogonov Variation an independent flavour. Black aims for immediately counterplay with ...f5 or ...d4.

8 $d3$

This odd-looking move is the main line. By moving his f3-knight White momentarily prevents ...f5 because after $exf5$ Black would not have a suitable way to recapture. Instead 8 $\text{d}e3$ $d3$ transposes to Line C1. White has also tried 8 $d3$, which Black should be happy to see so long as he does not overreact. A couple of other tries:

a) 8 $d3$ $\text{c}e8$ 9 $g3$ $f5$ 10 $\text{d}e2$ $d3$ 11 $g4$ $d3$ 12 $f3$ $\text{c}e7$ 13 $d3$ $d3$ 14 $\text{c}c2$ $d3$ 15 $\text{d}e3$ $f3$ 16 $d3$ $ex4$ 17 $f3$ $ex4$ $\text{c}h4+$ 18 $d3$ $d3$ 19 $\text{b}h2$ $\text{d}h6$ 20 $\text{d}xh6$ $\text{c}xh6+$ 21 $\text{c}c3$ $\text{d}d7$ gave Black a very comfortable position in K.Sakaev-T.Radjabov, Khanty Mansiysk 2009.

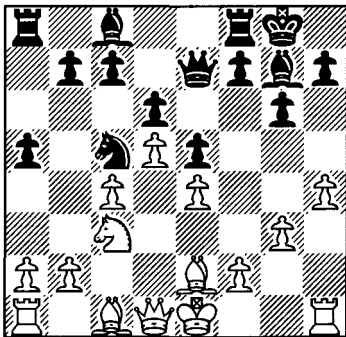
b) 8 $g3$ is a rare line recommended by Markos as an alternative to the main lines. Black has:

b1) 8...f5 9 $exf5$ $gxf5$ 10 $d3$ $d3$ 11 $\text{d}g2$ $d3$ 12 $\text{d}e3$ $\text{c}e7$ 13 0-0 was Yang Shen-Wenjun Ju, Nanjing 2009. Now 13...e4!? would take away the retreat of the $g5$ -knight and give Black counterplay.

b2) 8...d3 9 $\text{d}e2$ $f5$ 10 $exf5$ $gxf5$ 11 $d3$ (or the immediate 11 $g4$!?) and after 11...c8 12 $gxf5$ $\text{d}xf5$ 13 $\text{d}e3$ $d3$ 14 $\text{b}g1$ $d3$ 15 $\text{c}c1$ $\text{c}g6$ 16 $d3$! $\text{c}h5$? 17 $\text{b}g5$ White won material in I.Khairullin-E.Sutovsky, Aix-les-Bains 2011; here 15...e4 16 $d3$ is also annoying, so Black should likely begin with

11...♖e7 when 15...e4 would be much stronger in the analogous position with c7 covered) 11...♟f6 12 g4 ♖e8 13 gxf5 ♟xf5 14 ♟g4 ♟g6!? 15 ♟e6 ♟b4! was unclear in B.Macieja-I.Salgado Lopez, Rijeka 2010.

b3) 8...a5 9 ♟e2 (9 ♟g2 ♟a6 10 0-0 ♟c5 11 ♟e3 ♟d7 12 ♟e1 b6 13 ♟h2 ♖e8 14 ♟f3 f5!? 15 exf5 e4 16 ♟e2 ♟xf5 17 g4 ♖e5+ 18 ♟g1 ♟f4 gave rise to heavy complications in G.Vescovi-T.Radjabov, Bursa 2010) 9...♟a6 10 ♟h2 ♟f6 (10...♟c5!?) 11 ♟g4 ♟c5 12 ♟xf6+ ♖xf6 (Black could also play 12...♟xf6 13 h4 h5) 13 h4 ♖e7 (not 13...h5?? 14 ♟g5).



Now after 14 h5 (if 14 ♟e3 f5) Black has:

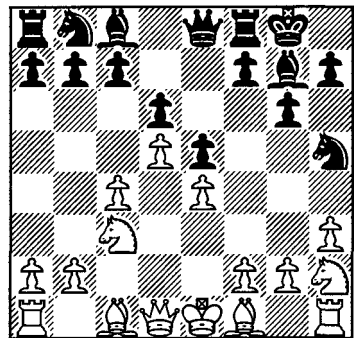
b31) 14...♟f6!? intending ...♟g5 should give Black enough counterplay.

b32) 14...gxf5!? 15 ♟e3 (instead 15 ♖xh5 f5 16 ♟e3 f4?! 17 ♟xc5 dxc5 18 ♟g4 was a little better for White in M.Krylov-A.Fedorov, Vladimir 2009, but 16...♟xe4 was a better try) 15...f5 16 ♟xc5 dxc5 17 ♟d3 ♖a6! 18 ♖xh5 f4 (18...♖b6!?) 19 g4 f3 20 ♖f5! (both sides fight for the initiative) 20...♟xf5 21 exf5

e4 22 ♟xe4 h5! 23 ♖xf3 was I.Lysyj-J.Gallagher, Budva 2009, and now 23...♟g6! is interesting.

b33) 14...f5 15 hxg6 hxg6 16 ♟e3 (Black also seems fine after 16 exf5 gxf5 17 ♖c2 a4 18 ♟h6 ♟xh6 19 ♖xh6 ♟g7 20 ♖h4 ♟d7 21 0-0-0 ♖h8, D.Jojua-L.Lenic, Istanbul 2005) 16...b6 (this looks like an improvement on 16...f4 17 ♟xc5 dxc5 18 ♖d2 ♖a6 19 0-0-0 when White had the initiative in B.Macieja-G.Souleidis, Peristeri 2010) 17 f3 (White should consider 17 exf5 with similar play to the game above) 17...f4 18 ♟xc5 (or 18 ♟f2 fxg3 19 ♟xg3 ♟f6 with the idea of ...♟g5) 18...bxc5 19 g4 was I.Lysyj-J.Markos, Plovdiv 2010. Yes, Markos faced his own suggestion, but in fairness he only claimed 8 g3 led to an interesting struggle, not an advantage for White. Now after 19...♟f6!? if anything I prefer Black because of his potential play on the dark squares.

8...♖e8



9 ♟e2

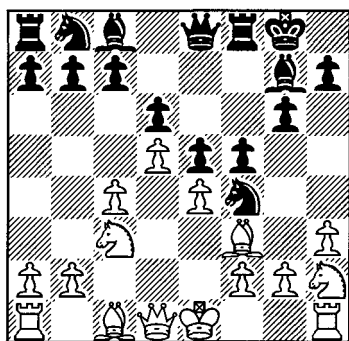
Instead 9 ♟g4 looks rather strange, but Nakamura recently played this idea

after 8... $\text{d}a6$. With the queen on e8, the h5-knight is supported and I certainly cannot see why Black should avoid 9...f5 when the knight is surely more of a liability than a strength after 10 $\text{d}h6+!$ $\text{c}h8$ 11 $\text{e}g5$ $\text{d}a6$, while 10 $\text{d}e3$ $\text{d}a6$ will quickly put pressure on e4.

9... $\text{d}f4$

Black can consider 9...f5 10 $\text{e}xf5$ $\text{d}f4$ 11 $\text{e}xf4$ $\text{e}xf4$ 12 $\text{f}xg6$ $\text{w}xg6$ with active play, although this is a bit speculative.

10 $\text{e}f3$ f5



11 $g3$

This pawn sacrifice is White's main concept. Other moves are less testing:

a) 11 $h4$ $\text{d}a6$ 12 $g3$ $\text{d}c5!$ 13 $\text{g}xf4$ $\text{e}xf4$ gives Black excellent play. After 14 $\text{e}5$ $\text{d}xe5$ 15 $\text{e}e2$ $\text{w}e7$ 16 $\text{d}f1$ $\text{f}3$ 17 $\text{e}xf3$ $\text{e}4$ 18 $\text{d}6$ $\text{e}xc3+$ 19 $\text{b}xc3$ $\text{c}xd6$ 20 $\text{e}g5$ $\text{w}e5$ Black had the initiative in L.Kavalek-M.Quinteros, Bauang 1973.

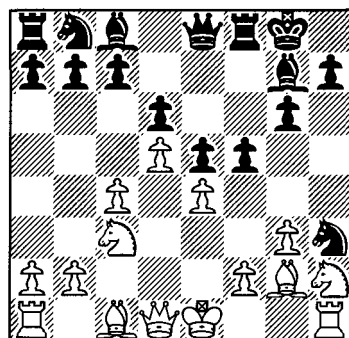
b) 11 $\text{d}f1$ $\text{d}a6$ 12 $\text{d}g3$ $\text{d}c5$ 13 0-0 $\text{d}cd3$ 14 $\text{e}xf5$ $\text{d}xc1$ 15 $\text{f}6$ $\text{d}cd3!$ (an unusual way to exchange dark-squared bishops!) 16 $\text{f}xg7$ $\text{x}g7$ was comfortable for Black in J.Bosch-M.Golubev, Dieren 1999.

c) 11 $\text{e}e3$ $\text{d}a6$ and now:

c1) 12 $h4$ $\text{w}e7$ 13 $g3$ $\text{d}b4!$ 14 $\text{w}b3$ $\text{d}fd3+$ 15 $\text{e}e2$ $\text{f}4$ 16 $\text{e}d2$ $\text{f}xg3$ 17 $\text{f}xg3$ $\text{w}xf3$ 18 $\text{d}xf3$ $\text{e}g4$ 19 $\text{w}af1$ $\text{w}f8$ 20 $\text{d}d1$ $\text{w}f7$ 21 $\text{e}e3$ $\text{e}xf3+$ 22 $\text{c}d2$ $\text{w}d7$ 23 $\text{w}hg1$ $\text{w}h3$ 24 $\text{a}3$ $\text{e}xe4$ 25 $\text{w}xf8+$ $\text{e}xf8$ 26 $\text{a}xb4$ $\text{w}h2+$ 27 $\text{c}c3$ $\text{d}c1$ 0-1 was the famous game L.Kavalek-G.Kasparov, Bugojno 1982.

c2) 12 0-0 $\text{d}c5$ 13 $b4$ (instead 13 $\text{e}xc5$ $\text{d}xc5$ is fine for Black, while after 13 $\text{e}xf5$ $\text{g}xf5$ 14 $\text{e}xf4$ $\text{e}xf4$ 15 $\text{w}e1$ $\text{w}d8$ has been played with success and 15... $\text{w}g6!$? looks okay too) 13... $\text{d}xe4$ (13... $\text{d}cd3!$?) 14 $\text{d}xe4$ $\text{f}xe4$ 15 $\text{e}xe4$ $\text{a}5$ 16 $\text{a}3$ $\text{e}f5$ was fine for Black in G.Kuzmin-E.Gufeld, Baku 1972, and 16... $\text{b}5!$? 17 $\text{c}5$ $\text{a}xb4$ 18 $\text{a}xb4$ $\text{e}f5$ is also interesting.

11... $\text{d}xh3$ 12 $\text{e}g2$



This is the critical position for 7... $\text{d}h5$. Black now has three options.

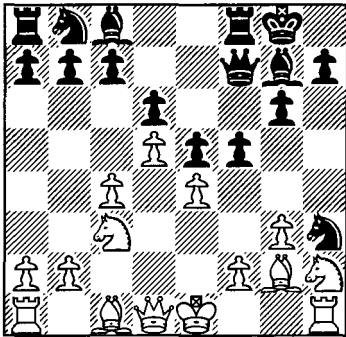
12... $\text{f}xe4$

This is probably best. The others:

a) 12...f4 has been the most common, but it is probably the worst choice! After 13 $\text{d}f3$ $g5$ (Black has also tried

13...♗xf2, but it is not exactly sound) 14 ♖xh3 (14 ♜xh3 g4 15 ♜h1 gxf3 16 ♜xf3 ♜g6 17 ♖h3 comes to the same thing) 14...g4 15 ♖g2 gxf3 16 ♜xf3 ♜g6 17 ♖h3 White is able to exchange light-squared bishops and Black does not really have anything to compensate for his positional defects: 17...♖xh3 (instead 17...♗a6?! 18 ♖xc8 ♜axc8 19 gxf4 exf4 20 ♖d2 ♖h8 21 0-0-0 c6 22 ♜dg1 was winning for White in A.Vyzmanavin-M.Chiburdanidze, Moscow 1981, while 17...fxg3 18 ♜xg3 ♜xg3 19 fxg3 leaves Black with a worse endgame) 18 ♜xh3 ♗d7 19 ♖d2 a6 and now both 20 0-0-0 and 20 ♖e2 favour White.

b) 12...♜f7 is interesting, at least. Black prepares latent pressure on the f-file and White has:

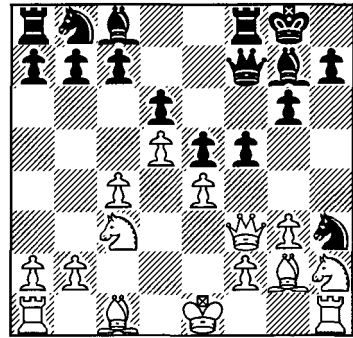


b1) 13 ♗f3 fxe4 14 ♗xe4 ♖g4 and now 15 ♜xh3 ♜f5! 16 ♗h4 (16 ♗eg5 e4 is also good for Black) 16...♜d7 was winning for Black in B.Damljanovic-R.Babaev, Benasque 2008, so White should prefer 15 ♜e2 ♗d7 (winning a tempo compared to 15...♖xf3 16 ♖xf3 ♜xf3 17 ♜xf3 ♜xf3 18 ♜xh3 ♜f8) 16

♜xh3 ♖xf3 17 ♖xf3 ♜xf3 18 ♜xf3 ♜xf3 19 ♖e2 ♜ff8 when he has some compensation for the pawn, but hardly enough for an advantage.

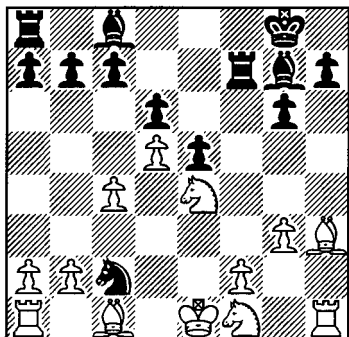
b2) 13 ♖xh3 fxe4 14 ♗g4 ♖g4 15 ♜xg4 ♜xf2+ 16 ♖d1 ♜d4+ 17 ♖d2 (White must avoid 17 ♖c2 ♜f2+ 18 ♖b3 ♗a6, but 17 ♖e1 ♜f2+ is a draw) 17...e3 18 ♜xd4 exd4 and now both 19 ♗b5 ♜f2 20 ♖e6+ ♖h8 21 ♖e1 ♜xb2 22 ♖f7 d3 23 ♖xg6 d2 and 19 ♖e6+ ♖h8 20 ♗e4 exd2 21 ♖xd2 h6 are unclear but do not seem worse for Black.

b3) 13 ♜f3!? looks the most dangerous.



After 13...fxe4 14 ♜xf7+ (14 ♗xe4 ♗a6 15 ♜xf7+ transposes) 14...♖xf7 15 ♗xe4 (or 15 ♖e3 when Black has a choice between 15...♗f4!? 16 gxf4 exf4 17 ♖d2 f3 18 ♖f1 ♖f5 with three good pawns for the piece and full compensation in D.Jakovenko-R.Mamedov, Moscow 2011, and the solid 15...♗a6 16 ♗xe4 ♖f5 17 f3 of A.Riazantsev-I.Khairullin, Budva 2009, when 17...h5!? looks pretty sensible) 15...♗a6 16 ♗f1 ♗b4 (Markos recommends 16...♗c5 17

♗xc5 ♗xf2 18 ♗e6 ♗xh1 19 ♖xh1 e4 which is probably a better try) 17 ♖xh3 ♗c2+ we have:

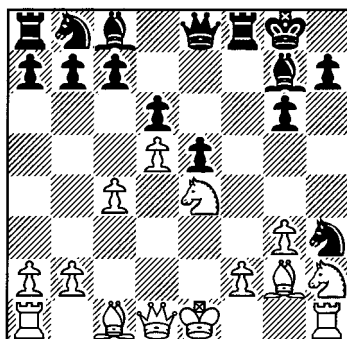


b31) 18 ♗d1 ♗xa1 19 ♖d2 (19 b3 a5 20 ♖b2 ♗xb3 21 axb3 a4 is also unclear) 20...b5! (Black must do something active, or else White will just walk over and take the knight) 21 cxb5 ♖b8 22 ♗c1 ♖xb5 23 ♗e3 c6 (Black chips away; if he can chase away the e4-knight, f2 will be vulnerable) 24 dxc6 (not 24 ♗xd6 ♖c5+ 25 ♗b1? ♖xf2) 24...d5!? (after 24...♖c7 25 ♗b1 ♖xc6 26 ♗xa1 the two knights looks more effective than the extra black rook) 25 ♗c3 ♖c5 26 ♗exd5 and now rather than 26...♖xf2? 27 ♖e3 with a winning position for White in A.Zhigalko-M.Vachier Lagrave, Warsaw (rapid) 2010, Black could have equalized with 26...♖xc6 27 ♗b1 (other moves are worse: for example, 27 ♖e3? ♖d7! 28 ♗b1 ♗c2! and the knight emerges; similar is 27 ♖h2 ♖d7!; and 27 ♖e1 e4! 28 ♗b1 ♖xc3! 29 ♗xc3 e3! is also good for Black) 27...♖d7 28 ♗xa1 (or 28 ♖g5 ♗c2 29 ♗e7+ ♖xe7 30 ♖xe7 ♗d4) 28...♖xc3! 29 ♖xc3 ♖xd5 and the position is equal.

b32) 18 ♗e2! is cleverer and gives Black problems: 18...♖xh3 19 ♖xh3 ♗xa1 20 ♗e3 intending ♖d2 and ♖h1xa1 has scored well for White in correspondence play, and White also won over the board in A.Grigoryan-D.Petrosian, Yerevan 2011.

13 ♗xe4

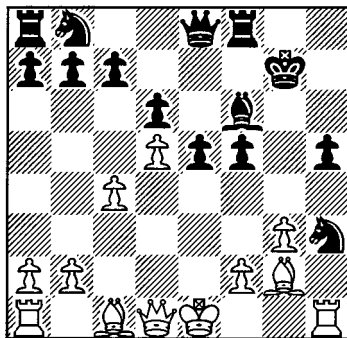
This is less common than 13 ♖e3, but as Markos points out, Black is okay after 13...♗a6! 14 ♗xe4 ♖f5 15 f3 h5!



13...♖f5

Black threatens to take on e4 and f2. The following sequence is forced:

14 ♗g4 h5 15 ♗ef6+ ♖xf6 16 ♗h6+ ♗g7 17 ♗xf5+ gxf5



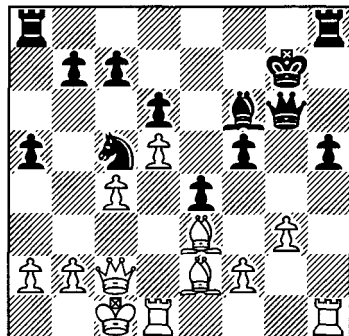
18 ♖xh3

White takes aim at the f5-pawn, but this does not cause Black any trouble. Instead Kasparov claimed that White was better after 18 ♖xh3, but after 18...♗h8 Markos considers the position to be unclear. While White has some potential play on the light squares as compensation for the pawn, Black has his trumps as well. Here 19 ♖c2 e4 20 ♖f4 (or 20 ♖e3 ♗a6 21 0-0-0 when Black can play 21...♗c5 with an unclear position or he can grab material with 21...♗b4 22 ♖b3 ♗d3+ 23 ♖xd3 exd3 24 ♖xd3 ♖e5!?) 20...♗a6 21 ♖f1 ♗c5 22 ♖e3 ♖a4! 23 ♖xa4 ♗xa4 24 ♖b1 was G.Faizrahmanov-E.Bulushev, Novokuznetsk 2007, when Black could have played 24...♔g6! with excellent chances.

18...♖g6 19 ♖c2 e4 20 ♖e3 ♗a6 21 ♖f1 ♗c5 22 0-0-0 a5 23 ♖e2 ♗h8

After several logical moves a position has been reached where White has compensation for the pawn, but no more.

The h5-pawn is weak, but it is an extra pawn and Black's pieces stand well.



24 ♖df1?!

A misguided plan. White wants to connect his rooks so he can play ♖d1 to attack the h5-pawn, but his own king is not so safe.

24...a4 25 ♖d1

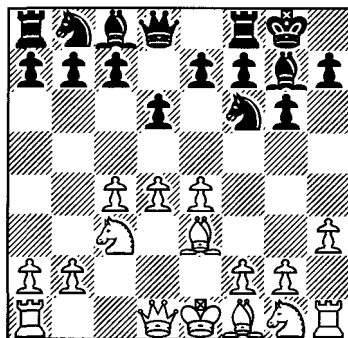
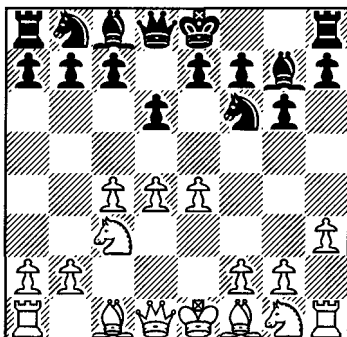
This was N.Meskovs-E.Fernandez Romero, Caleta 2011. Now 25...♖e8! with the idea of ...♖e5 looks very strong. If 26 f4 exf3 27 ♖xf3 a3 gives Black a strong attack.

Chapter 11

Other h3 Lines

5 h3 0-0 6 ♖e3 and 6 ♖g5

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 h3



In this chapter we look at lines where White plays 5 h3, but avoids transposing into the Makogonov Variation.

5...0-0

Now of course 6 ♘f3 transposes to the Makogonov Variation of the previous chapter. That leaves:

A: 6 ♖e3

B: 6 ♖g5

A) 6 ♖e3

This flexible system is not seen very often, but it is not harmless and has been occasionally played by grandmasters such as Karpov, I.Sokolov, Aleksandrov, Kharlov, Miroshnichenko and Grivas.

6...e5

Black can also play 6...♘a6 first. Then 7 ♗d3 e5 8 d5 transposes to the main line, while 7 ♘f3 e5 8 d5 is the Makogonov. White does have an extra option, however, in 7 ♘f3 e5 and then 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 c5!? targeting the a6-

knight. This is hardly the end of the world for Black, but there is no reason to allow White the extra option.

7 d5

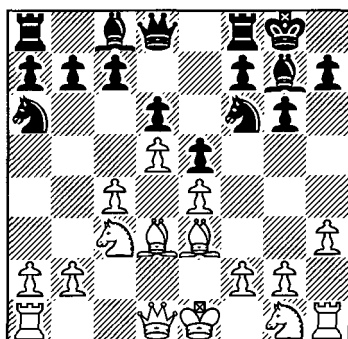
Here 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♖xd8 ♜xd8 is nothing for White.

7...♖a6

Black could also play 7...a5 when 8 ♖f3 is the Makogonov and 8 ♔d3 ♖a6 9 ♖ge2 ♖c5 10 ♔c2 transposes to the main line. However, White has the extra options of 8 g4 ♖a6 9 ♖ge2 ♖c5 10 ♖g3 and 8 c5!?

8 ♔d3

Instead 8 ♖f3 is the Makogonov, while 8 g4 ♖c5 hits the e4-pawn before White can get his knight to g3, so he has to make a move he normally would not make. After 9 ♔g2 (or 9 ♖c2) Black will continue 9...a5 10 ♖ge2 c6 with the idea of ...cxd5, ...♔d7 and then ...a4 followed by ...♖a5, or ...♖b6.



8...♖c5

Playing this at once ensures that the knight will not get sidelined so easily by a3 and b4. Black can also play for a quick ...f5 or try to bring a knight to f4:

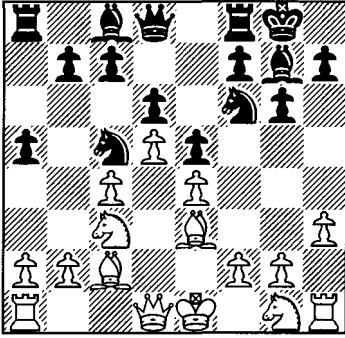
a) 8...♖d7 9 a3 (another good option is 9 g4 ♖dc5 10 ♔c2 f5 11 a3 fxe4 12 ♔xe4! when it is not easy for Black to get the a6-knight into play) 9...♖ac5 (9...f5 10 b4 ♖f6 11 ♖f3 c5 12 ♖b1 might have been drawn here in I.Khenkin-Z.Efimenko, Subotica 2008, but Black has not solved his problems) 10 ♔c2 f5 (if 10...a5 11 b4) 11 b4 ♖xe4 12 ♔xe4 (or 12 ♖xe4 fxe4 13 ♔xe4 a5) 12...fxe4 13 ♖xe4 ♖h4?! (13...a5 looks better) 14 g4 ♖e7 15 ♖e2 ♖f6 16 ♖g3 ♖xe4 17 ♖xe4 ♔d7 18 0-0 a5 19 f3 and White's play was easier in D.Barlov-Ki.Georgiev, Arandjelovac 1991.

b) 8...♖h5 9 g3! (if 9 ♖ge2 f5 10 exf5 gxf5 11 g4 ♖f4! gives Black good play) 9...♖e8 (or 9...♖c5 10 ♔e2! ♖f6 11 ♖c2 a5 12 0-0-0, R.Knaak-J.Piket, Hamburg 1991) 10 ♔e2 ♖f6 11 ♖f3 ♖d7 (after 11...♖c5 12 ♖d2 a5 13 g4 White has an ideal Makogonov set-up) 12 g4 f5 13 gxf5 gxf5 14 exf5 ♖dc5 15 ♖g1 ♖h8 16 ♖h4 ♔xf5 (after 16...♔f6 17 ♔h5! Black is crushed following 17...♖e7 18 ♖g6+ hxg6 19 ♔xg6 and 17...♖d3+ 18 ♖f1 ♖xb2 19 ♖e2 does not help much) 17 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 18 ♖d2 ♖f8 19 0-0-0 ♖f6 20 ♖g4 ♔h6 21 ♖dg1 ♔xe3 22 ♖xe3 ♖h6 23 ♖d1 ♖af8 was J.Ivanov-V.Akopian, Ubeda 2001. Here 24 a3! with the idea of b4 and ♖e4 would put Black under pressure.

c) 8...c6 is not played much, but it may be Black's best move order, as it avoids note 'b' to White's 10th move, below. After 9 ♖ge2 ♖c5 10 ♔c2 cxd5 11 cxd5 a5 we transpose to the main

line, while 9 g4 cxd5 10 cxd5 ♖c5 11 ♖c2 a5 is the less dangerous note 'a' to White's 10th move.

9 ♖c2 a5



10 ♖ge2

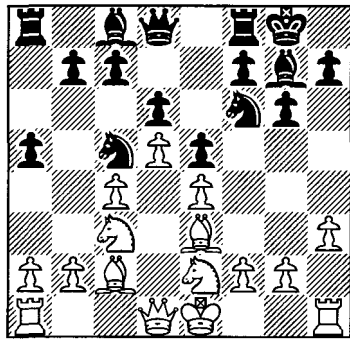
This is the most common, but there are a couple of alternatives:

a) 10 g4 c6 11 ♖ge2 cxd5 12 cxd5 ♖d7 13 a3 (or 13 ♖g3 b5 with good queenside counterplay in A.Kharlov-S.Dolmatov, St Petersburg 1998) 13...b5 (also possible is 13...a4!? with the idea 14 ♖xc5?! dxc5 when taking the a4-pawn would leave the e4-pawn loose) 14 b4 ♖a6 15 ♖b1 axb4 16 axb4 (White has pushed back the knight, but advancing on both sides of the board has left his position a bit stretched out) 16...h5! (Black begins a typical King's Indian sequence) 17 f3 (if 17 g5 ♖h7 with the idea of ...f6) 17...♖h7 18 ♖d2 (18 gxh5 ♖h4+) 18...h4 19 ♖g1 ♖f6 with an excellent game for Black in M.Mitkov-Z.Kozul, Struga 2008.

b) 10 ♖d2 was Bologan's concern. White prevents ...c6 and after 10...♖h5 (instead 10...c6 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 0-0-

puts too much pressure on d6, but Black could consider 10...♖d7) 11 ♖ge2 f5 12 exf5 ♖xf5 (12...gxf5 is probably a better try), as in A.Bets-V.Fedoseev, Peterhof 2007, Bologan suggests 13 ♖xf5 gxf5 14 g4! fxg4 15 hxg4 ♖f4 16 ♖xc5 dxc5 17 ♖g3 with a nice edge for White.

c) 10 a3 c6 11 ♖f3 is a strange form of the Makogonov and 11...cxd5 12 cxd5 ♖d7 13 0-0 ♖c7 (with White's knight on f3, 13...a4!? can be met by 14 ♖xc5 dxc5 15 ♖e1, although perhaps 15...♖e8 followed by ...b5 or ...♖h5 isn't so bad for Black) 14 ♖c1 ♖fc8 15 b4 axb4 16 axb4 ♖a6 17 ♖b1 ♖d8 18 ♖b3 ♖h5 saw Black playing on both flanks, with equality in I.Sokolov-N.Kabanov, Aix-les-Bains 2011.

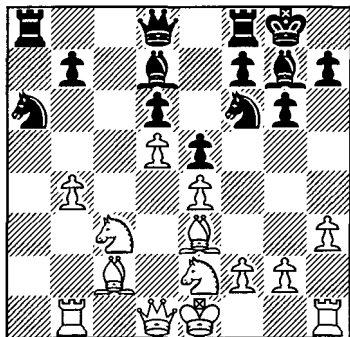


10...c6 11 a3 cxd5 12 cxd5 ♖d7 13 b4

Pushing back the knight is critical. If 13 0-0 a4 the position is the same as in the main line of Line B1, below, except White's bishop is on e3 instead of g5. In that line White sometimes can make use of the pin on the f6-knight not only because the knight cannot move, but also because Black has to watch out for

♖f3 pressuring the knight. White's bishop also sometimes voluntarily retreats to e3, though, so overall it is probably a fair trade. In any case, Black does not have any real problems in either line.

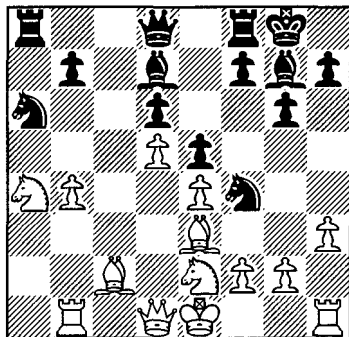
13...axb4 14 axb4 ♖a6 15 ♖b1



22 f4? g5! 23 fxg5 f4 in P.Cramling-S.Kindermann, Dortmund 1986.

16...♗f4!

This is much stronger than the 16...f5?! 17 exf5 ♗xf5?! 18 ♖b6 of I.Sokolov-P.Thipsay, Moscow Olympiad 1994.



White has pushed Black back, but now his rook is tied to the b4-pawn. Black is also ahead in development, despite the time spent moving his knight.

15...♗h5! 16 ♖a4

Or 16 ♗d2 ♖c8 and then:

a) 17 g3 prevents the knight from coming into f4, but White cannot castle: 17...♖c4 18 ♗d1 f5 (Black could also consider 18...♗f6!? with the idea of ...♗f3: for example, 19 ♗d3 ♗f3 20 ♖h2 ♖xe4! 21 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 with excellent compensation for the exchange) 19 ♗d3 ♖c8 and Black had a good game in M.Gerusel-W.Beckemeier, German League 1983.

b) 17 0-0 ♗f4 18 ♖fc1 ♗h4 19 ♗d1 ♗xg2 20 ♗xg2 ♗xh3+ 21 ♗g1 f5 with two pawns and a strong initiative for the piece. White lost very quickly after

Now:

a) 17 ♗xf4? is too greedy. After 17...exf4 18 ♗xf4 Black played 18...♗b5 and had good compensation for the pawn in B.Kovacevic-M.Zufic, Nova Gorica 2001, but 18...b5! looks even stronger. After 19 ♖b2 ♖xb4 if White plays 20 ♗xd6 then 20...♗xc2+ 21 ♗xc2 ♖c8 intending ...♖e8 or ...♗a5+ gives Black a tremendous initiative.

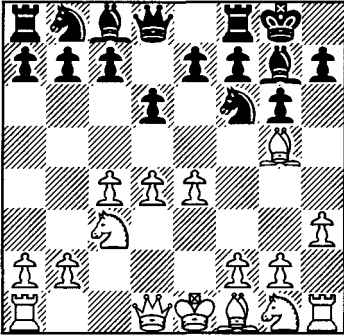
b) 17 0-0 ♗g5!? (critical, but Black can also play 17...♗b5 18 ♗ac3 ♗c4 with a fine position) 18 g3 is unclear. Some possibilities:

b1) 18...♗xh3 19 ♖e1 ♗xe2+ 20 ♗xe2 ♗e7 21 ♗h2 ♗d7 22 ♖b6 and White has compensation for the pawn.

b2) 18...♗xh3+ 19 ♗g2 ♗h5 20 ♗ec3 ♗f4+ (worse is 20...♗xd1? 21 ♗xd1 with the idea of ♖b6 when the h3-knight is

in trouble, but 20...♗g4!? 21 f3 ♗f4+ 22 gxf4 ♖h3+ 23 ♖g1 exf4 24 ♖xf4 ♜fc8 would be unclear) 21 gxf4 ♜h3+ 22 ♖g1 ♖g4 23 f3 ♜g3+ with a draw.

B) 6 ♖g5



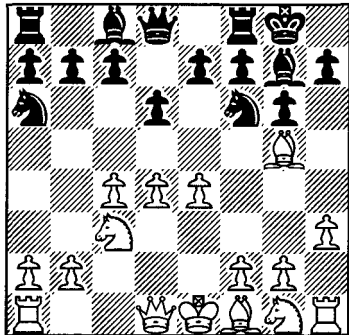
This tricky line has long been favoured by Romanian players. White is happy to provoke ...h6 and then retreat the bishop to e3. It is similar to the Averbakh Variation, but White has played h3 instead of ♖e2. Here White is less well developed, but he can play a quick ♗f3 and retreat the bishop to e3 if necessary without worrying about ...♗g4. White may also play a quick g2-g4.

6...♗a6

This is a classical approach. Black will play ...e5 and attempt to play around the g5-bishop. It is worse to play 6...h6 7 ♖e3 e5 as White will quickly gain a tempo with ♜d2, attacking the pawn on h6. If Black protects the pawn with ...♖h7, then after ♖d3 he will be under pressure on the b1-h7 and c1-h6 diagonals, so ...f5 will be difficult to achieve.

The main alternative is to continue in a similar vein to the Averbakh with 6...c5 7 d5 e6 (after 7...h6 8 ♖e3 e6 9 ♜d2 exd5 10 exd5 ♜e8 11 ♖d3! White is a tempo up on Averbakh because the bishop has gone to d3 in one move) 8 ♖d3 exd5 and now both 9 cxd5 and 9 exd5 are important lines.

By playing 6...♗a6 we will reach similar positions to those in the Makogonov. There will even be several possible transpositions if White plays an early ♗f3.



7 ♖d3

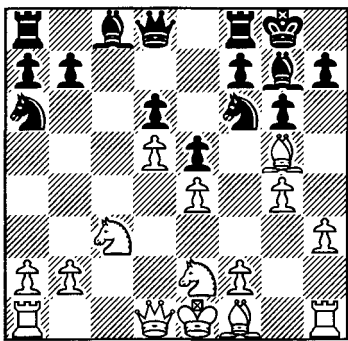
The development of the bishop to d3 is a common feature of these early h3 lines. Instead 7 ♗f3 e5 8 d5 ♜e8 is one of the main lines of the Makogonov. White does have two alternatives:

- a) 7 g4 e5 8 d5 ♜e8 9 ♗ge2 (9 ♗f3 is again a main line Makogonov) and now:
 - a1) 9...c6 10 ♗g3 cxd5 11 cxd5 ♖d7 12 ♖d3 ♗c5 13 ♖c2 a5 14 a4 ♜d8! (Black has lost time, but White has used that time to play g4 in a position where it is not necessarily so good) 15 ♜b1 ♜c8 16 ♖f1 ♗a6 (instead 16...♜b6 17 ♜f3 is

annoying, but 16...h6 17 ♖e3 ♜b6 is a reasonable alternative) 17 ♗d3 ♝c5 with a fairly level position in P.Cramling-J.Gallagher, Biel 1994.

a2) 9...♝c5 10 ♜g3 a5 11 ♗e2 c6 12 h4 cxd5 13 cxd5 ♗d7 14 ♗e3 (with the idea of g4-g5) 14...♜b8 (14...♜d8!?) 15 h5 b5 16 g5 ♜e8 17 hxg6 fxg6 18 ♗g4 ♜c8 19 ♗xd7 ♜xd7 is fine for Black and after 20 ♜h4 b4 21 ♝ce2 ♜b5 22 ♜f1 ♜a7! 23 ♜g2 ♜af7 24 ♜d2 ♝d3 he had taken over the initiative in M.Tupy-B.Maryasin, Olomouc 2001.

b) 7 ♜ge2 commits the knight too early as it blocks White's development and will soon have to move again – it is better to play ♗d3 first. In general I am suspicious of lines where White has to play such an early ♜g3. Here 7...e5 8 d5 c6! is a good response, as White's development is awkward and Black can create counterplay quickly on the queen-side after 9 g4 (9 ♜d2 cxd5 10 cxd5 ♝c5 11 ♜g3 a5 12 ♗e2 a4 13 0-0 ♜a5 14 ♜fc1 ♗d7 15 f3 ♜fc8 was fine for Black in M.Suba-L.Nisipeanu, Baile Tusnad 1997) 9...cxd5 10 cxd5 and now:



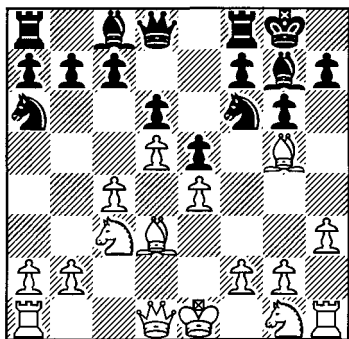
b1) 10...b5!? 11 ♜g3 b4 12 ♝b1 (instead 12 ♝a4 ♜a5 13 b3 ♗d7 14 ♝b2 was S.Atalik-Z.Peng, Wijk aan Zee 1997; here Black should have tried 14...♝c5 15 ♝c4 ♜c7 with the idea 16 ♜f3 ♜e8 17 ♗e7?! ♗xg4!) 12...♝c5 13 ♝d2 ♗d7 (13...a5!?) 14 ♗c4 ♜b6!? 15 ♜f3 ♜e8 16 0-0 (after 16 ♗e7 ♝c7 17 ♗xf8 ♜xf8 Black has quite good positional compensation with ideas like ...♝b5 and ...♗h6) 16...♝c7 17 ♜fc1 ♜fc8 18 ♗e3 ♝b5 19 ♗xb5 ♜xb5 20 ♝c4 was unclear in A.Beliavsky-D.Stellwagen, Amsterdam 2009, and here 20...♜b8 with the idea of ...a5 looks best.

b2) 10...♗d7 11 ♜g3 ♜b6 12 ♜d2 ♝c5 13 ♗e2 a5 14 ♗e3 (Black had good counterplay after 14 0-0 ♜fc8 15 ♗e3 a4 16 ♜fc1 ♜a5 17 f3 b5 18 ♝d1 ♜xd2 19 ♗xd2 ♜e8 20 ♝f2 ♝c7 21 ♜c2 ♜ab8 22 ♜ac1 b4 in M.Suba-A.Motylev, Eforie Nord 2000) 14...♜fc8 15 ♜c1 a4 16 f3 ♜a5 17 ♜f2 b5 18 ♜g2 b4 19 ♝d1 a3 20 b3 and now Black came up with the fantastic 20...♝xb3! 21 axb3 ♜xc1 22 ♜xc1 a2 23 ♜a1 ♝xd5! 24 exd5 e4 25 ♝b2 in Z.Gyimesi-J.Ivanov, Andorra 2001. Here 25...♜xd5! with the idea of ...♜xb3 would have given Black a winning position.

7...e5

Sometimes Black plays 7...c6 before ...e5, while 7...♜e8 is also common, as Black reserves the option of playing 8 g4 c5!?. Instead 8 ♜ge2 e5 9 d5 transposes to the notes to White 9th move in Line B2. I prefer the more direct text move.

8 d5

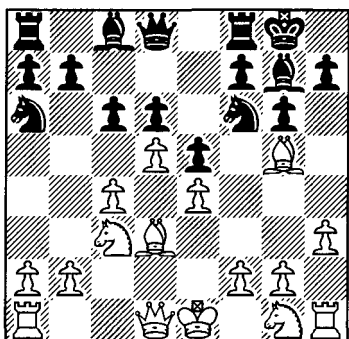


Now Black has a choice. He can play 8...c6 in order to ensure he can create counterplay on the queenside if White chooses to play on the kingside, or he can play 8...♖e8 when play is similar to that in the Makogonov.

B1: 8...c6

B2: 8...♖e8

B1) 8...c6



9 g4

Alternatives:

a) 9 g4 looks premature, as Black can immediately create play with 9...cxd5 10 cxd5 ♗c5 11 ♖c2 ♖b6 12 ♖b1 a5 with

the idea of ...♗d7, ...♖fc8, and perhaps ...♖a6!? and ...b5-b4.

b) 9 a3 also seems a bit early: 9...♗c5 10 ♖c2 cxd5 11 ♗xd5 (11 cxd5 is safer) 11...♗e6 12 ♖e3?! ♗xd5 13 cxd5 ♗f4 14 ♖f3 f5 and White's position fell apart in A.Chernin-G.Kasparov, Munich (blitz) 1994.

c) 9 ♗f3 (this is like a Makogonov with 8...c6 9 ♖d3, but in that move order both 9 ♗d2 and 9 ♖e2 are more dangerous) 9...cxd5 10 cxd5 (10 ♗xd5 ♖e6 is not dangerous) 10...♗c5 11 ♖c2 a5 12 0-0 ♖d7 13 a4 (instead 13 a3 a4 is similar to the main line, but White does not even have a quick f2-f4 available) 13...♖b6 14 ♖b1 ♖fc8 15 ♗d2 ♖a6 (15...♖b4!?) 16 ♖f3 ♗h5 17 ♖d1 ♖d3 18 ♖e3 ♗f4 with complicated play in Z.Pyda-E.Prokopchuk, Koszalin 2001.

9...cxd5 10 cxd5

This is the normal move, but the alternate recaptures are also possible, if not particularly threatening:

a) 10 ♗xd5 ♗c5 (or even 10...♖a5+ 11 ♖d2 ♖d8) 11 ♖c2 ♗e6 12 ♖e3 ♗xd5 13 cxd5 ♗f4 14 ♗xf4 exf4 15 ♖xf4 ♖xb2 16 ♖b1 ♖a5+ looks a lot like a Grünfeld. After 17 ♗f1 (or 17 ♖d2 ♖xa2) 17...♖xa2 18 ♖xd6 ♖a6+ 19 ♗g1 ♖xd6 20 ♖xb2 ♖e5 21 ♖b4 a5 22 ♖d4 ♖d7 23 ♖d2 ♖fc8 Black's queenside pawns were at least as dangerous as White's centre in J.Socha-K.Zpevakova, correspondence 1999.

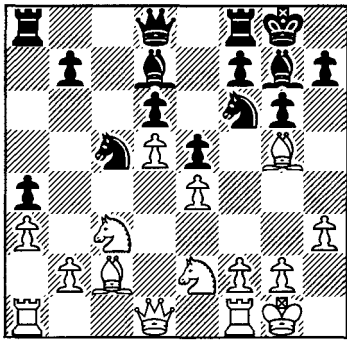
b) 10 exd5 ♗c5 11 ♖c2 a5 12 0-0 ♖d7 lead to unclear play after 13 ♖b1 (or 13 ♗g3 ♖b6 14 b3 ♖fc8, C.Seel-

N.Djukic, Oropesa del Mar 2001)
 13...♖e8 14 ♘g3 h5!? 15 ♙e3 b6 in
 M.Kazhgaleyev-J.Polgar, Calatrava
 (rapid) 2007.

10...♗c5 11 ♙c2 a5 12 0-0 ♙d7 13 a3

Black is ready to advance on the queenside, so White must decide what type of structure he wants. The text move allows Black to fix the queenside, but after 13 a4 ♖b6 14 ♗b1 ♗fc8 15 ♙e3 ♖b4 Black has decent play as well.

13...a4



14 ♖h1

With this move White prepares to play a rather unconventional f2-f4. This is probably the best idea because Black cannot easily get a knight to e5 and the alternatives have not given White much. Certainly 14 g4 ♖b6 15 ♙e3 (not 15 ♗b1? h5!) 15...♗fc8 and 14 ♗c1 ♖b6 15 ♗b1 ♗fc8 look fine for Black. White's main alternative is 14 ♖d2 ♖b6 15 ♗ab1 ♗fc8 and now:

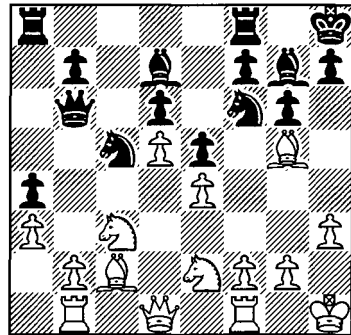
a) 16 ♗g3 ♖d8 (or 16...♗b3 17 ♙xb3 ♖xb3 18 f4 ♖b6+ and ...♖d4) 17 ♙h6 (with this move White tries to get close to the black king, but from a positional

standpoint Black should welcome this exchange) 17...♙xh6 18 ♖xh6 ♖f8 19 ♖e3 ♙e8 was agreed drawn in G.Kasparov-V.Kramnik, Las Palmas 1996.

b) After 16 ♖h1 ♙e8 17 ♗g3 (after 17 f4 exf4 Black can quickly bring a knight to e5) 17...♗fd7 18 ♙h6 ♖d8 (Hazai suggests 18...♙xh6 19 ♖xh6 ♖d8) 19 ♙g5 ♖b6 20 ♙h6 ♖d8 21 ♙g5 ♙f6! Black declined a repetition and soon had a slight initiative with 22 ♙e3 ♗b6 23 ♖e2 ♙g5 24 ♗d1 ♙f4! in A.Yermolinsky-R.Kasimdzhanov, Wijk aan Zee 1999.

14...♖e7

Black can also play 14...♖b6 15 ♗b1 ♖h8 (15...♗fc8 looks illogical with White's f2-f4 coming), preparing to curl up with ...♗g8 if necessary.



It is not easy for White to achieve anything here:

a) 16 f4 is untried. After 16...h6 17 fxe5 dxe5 (17...♗g4!?) 18 ♙e3 ♖d6 the position is fairly level with chances for both sides.

b) 16 g4 looks a bit out of place: 16...♗g8 17 ♗g3 ♖a6 18 h4 ♖c4 19 h5

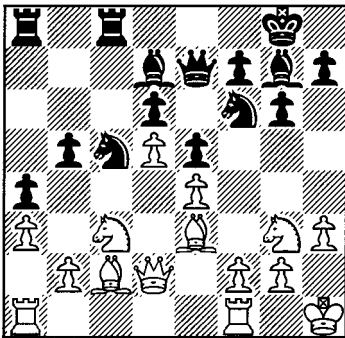
♙h6 20 ♖xh6 ♜xh6 21 f3 f6 22 ♖d2 ♜f7 23 ♔g2 ♔g7 was fine for Black in A.Dreev-A.Fedorov, Maikop 1998.

c) 16 ♜g3 ♜g8 17 ♖e3 ♖a5 18 ♖d2 ♖d8?! 19 f4 gave White some initiative in L.Psakhis-K.Movszisizian, Balaguer 1998, but it would have been more consistent to have played 18...b5 19 f4 b4 20 axb4 ♖xb4 with counterplay.

15 ♜g3

Black also reached a comfortable position after 15 ♖d2 ♜fc8 16 ♖ab1 (16 f4 h6!) 16...b5 17 f3 ♖e8 18 g4 ♖ab8 19 ♜a2 ♖b7 20 ♜b4 ♜a6 21 ♜g3 ♜xb4 22 axb4 ♜d7 23 ♖d3 ♜b6 in I.Ivanisevic-M.Tratar, Istanbul 2003.

15...♜fc8 16 ♖e3 b5 17 ♖d2



17...♖e8!

Black's pieces all look well placed, but he comes up with a good plan create an initiative on the queenside.

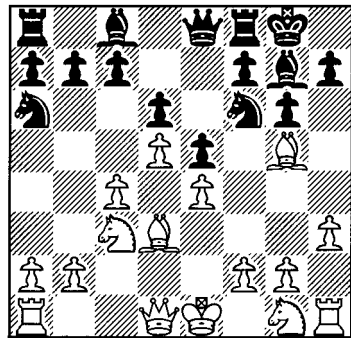
18 ♖g5

If 18 f4 exf4 19 ♖xf4 ♜fd7! and the knight comes to the e5-square.

18...♖f8! 19 ♖ad1 ♖ab8 20 ♜a2 ♜fd7 21 ♜b4 ♜b6 22 ♖d3 ♜b3 23 ♖e1 ♜c4 24 ♖xc4 ♖xc4

With the bishop-pair and the possibility to play on both sides of the board, Black was doing very well in J.Tihonov-A.Fedorov, Minsk 2011.

B2) 8...♖e8



This is a different approach, although Black can still play ...c6 if necessary.

9 g4

White prevents ...♜h5 and hopes to dissuade Black from breaking with ...f5. Instead 9 ♜f3 is the Makogonov, but White has a major alternative in 9 ♜ge2. This may be stronger than the text – at least it is safer. Black has:

a) 9...♜c5 10 ♖c2 a5 11 g4 is note 'a' to Black's 9th move in our main line, but 11 0-0 ♖d7 (if 11...♜fd7?! 12 ♜b5) 12 ♖b1 looked better for White in I.Ivanisevic-M.Tosic, Herceg Novi 2001.

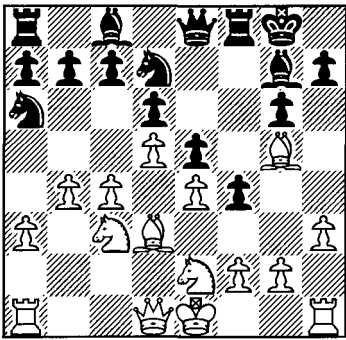
b) 9...♜h5 10 ♖d2 (after 10 g4 ♜f4 11 ♜xf4 exf4 Black is doing well after both 12 ♖d2?! ♜c5 and 12 ♖xf4 f5) 10...f5 11 0-0-0 (11 f3 f4 looks fine, while 11 exf5 gxf5 12 0-0-0 e4 13 ♖b1 ♜c5 14 f3 ♖d7 was unclear in A.Mikhalevski-

B.Avrukh, Israeli League 2008) 11...♖c5 12 ♙c2 f4 13 g4 fxg3 14 fxg3 ♙d7 15 g4 ♗f4 16 ♗xf4 exf4 17 ♚df1 ♙a4! and Black had excellent counterplay in A.Mikhalevski-M.Pavlovic, Biel 1998.

c) 9...♗d7 and now:

c1) 10 0-0 does not challenge Black's concept. After 10...f5 11 exf5 gxf5 12 f4 e4 13 ♙c2 ♖h5 14 ♗d4?! ♖xd1 15 ♚axd1 ♗b4 16 ♙b1 ♗c5 17 ♗cb5 ♗bd3! 18 b4 ♙xd4+ 19 ♗xd4 ♗xb4 Black was doing well in P.Cramling-J.Gallagher, Bern 1992.

c2) 10 a3 is always a critical plan with a knight on a6. After 10...f5 (instead 10...♗ac5!? 11 ♙c2 a5 is not so bad after 12 b4 ♗a6 or 12 ♗b5 ♗a6) 11 b4 f4 the position is unclear.



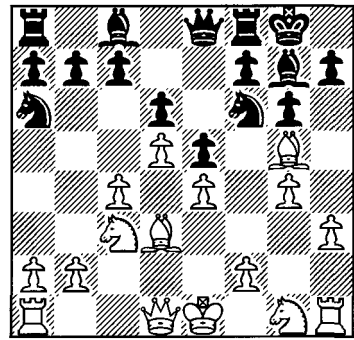
White has a space advantage, but his king does not have an ideal home and Black can exchange the dark-squared bishops. It is not so easy for White to do anything, while Black regroups. After 12 f3 ♙f6 13 ♙xf6 ♚xf6 (if 13...♗xf6 14 c5) there are a couple of examples:

c21) 14 ♖a4 ♖e7 15 ♗d1 ♗ab8 16 ♗f2 ♚f7 and Black is ready to play ...a5

or ...♗f6. White overreacted with 17 c5?! dxc5 18 d6?! cxd6 19 ♙c4 ♗b6 20 ♙xf7+ ♗xf7 21 ♖c2 ♙e6 when Black had too much for the exchange in R.Janssen-D.Reinderman, Hilversum 2008.

c22) 14 ♖b3 ♗h8 15 ♗d2 c5! 16 b5 ♗c7 17 ♗a4?! (a misguided plan) 17...♖d8 18 b6 ♗xb6 19 ♗xb6 axb6 20 ♖xb6 ♚a6 21 ♖b2 ♗e8 22 ♖c3 ♚f7 23 ♚ab1 ♗f6 with an excellent position for Black in S.Sergienko-Z.Efimenko, St Petersburg 2004.

After 9 g4 Black has several possibilities.



9...♗d7

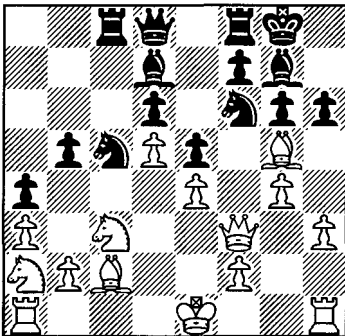
This consistent move is Black's most common approach. Alternatives:

a) 9...♗c5 10 ♙c2 a5 11 ♗ge2 ♗fd7 (11...♙d7 is variation 'b') 12 ♗g3 ♗b6 (we have seen this idea before; the knight is not badly placed here at all) 13 ♖e2 (White could play 13 b3, but then castling queenside would be risky) 13...♙d7 14 h4 ♗ba4 15 ♗xa4 ♙xa4 16 b3 ♙d7 17 h5 was E.Agrest-V.Milov, Frankfurt 2000, and 17...b5!? looks sensible.

b) 9...♗d7 10 ♖ge2 ♖c5 11 ♖c2 a5 12 ♖g3 and here 12...b5?! is premature because of 13 cxb5 with the idea 13...♗xb5? 14 ♖f3, but both 12...♗h8, giving the f6-knight a retreat, and 12...♗b8!? intending ...b5 are interesting.

c) 9...♗h8 10 ♖ge2 ♖g8 11 ♖g3 f6 (11...f5?! does not work: 12 exf5 e4 13 ♖cxe4 gxf5 14 gxf5 ♖xf5 15 ♖e3 with a clear advantage in E.Bareev-D.Mozetic, Belgrade 1993) 12 ♖e3 ♖h6 13 ♖xh6 ♖xh6 14 ♖e2?! ♖e7 15 ♖d2 ♖g7 16 0-0-0 ♖d7 17 ♖dg1 ♖f7 18 h4 c5 was B.Avrukh-G.Mohr, Pula 2000, and here 18...♖c5!? was also possible.

d) 9...c6 looks inconsistent, but Black is only switching plans now that White has committed himself. After 10 ♖ge2 cxd5 11 cxd5 ♖c5 12 ♖c2 a5 13 a3 a4 14 ♖g3 (Belavsky claims that White is much better after 14 ♖d2, but I do not see what the problem is) 14...b5 15 ♖f3 ♖d8 16 ♖ge2 (if 16 ♖xb5 ♗b8) 16...♖d7 17 ♖a2 ♗c8 18 ♖ec3 h6 White has:

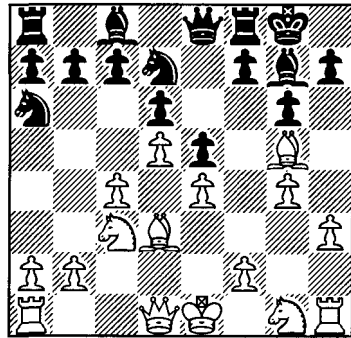


d1) 19 ♖e3 ♖b3! 20 ♖xb3 axb3 21 ♖b4 ♗xc3! 22 bxc3 ♖c7 23 ♖d2 ♖c4 and White's position is falling apart.

d2) 19 ♖d2 h5 (or 19...♖b7!? with the idea of ...♖a5-c4) 20 g5 ♖h7 with the idea of ...f6 gives Black counterplay.

d3) 19 ♖h4 g5 20 ♖g3 ♖b3 (again 20...♖b7!? is possible) 21 ♖xb3 axb3 22 ♖b4 h5!? was unclear in A.Beliavsky-Z.Kozul, Portoroz 1997. There were other interesting possibilities such as 22...♖b6, 22...♗c4 and even 22...♗xc3!? 23 bxc3 ♖c7.

Returning to 9...♖d7:



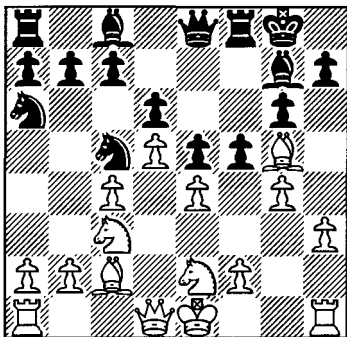
10 a3

White plays against the a6-knight. This is logical enough, but it does cost him a tempo and weakens some squares on the queenside. If White loses control, his king often gets stuck in the centre and he can easily regret the advance of the g-pawn. The alternatives do not look any better, however, as Black is able to fight for the initiative:

a) 10 ♖f3 f5 (10...♖dc5 with the idea of ...f5 is possible as well) 11 gxf5 gxf5 12 ♖g1 (not 12 exf5? e4) 12...♗h8 13 ♖h4 (this is a standard idea, but if White loses the initiative, his position can disintegrate rapidly) 13...♖dc5 14

♙c2 fxe4 15 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 16 ♙xe4 ♗c5
 17 ♖c2 (if 17 ♙c2 e4!) 17...♗xe4 18
 ♗xe4 ♗h5 19 ♖c1 ♙d7 20 ♖c3 ♖ae8 21
 ♖cg3 b5! 22 ♗g2 e4 23 ♙e7 e3! (he only
 move, but crushing) 24 f3 (or 24 ♖xe3
 ♙xb2! with the idea of ...♙c3+) 24...♖xe7
 0-1 T.Paunovic-V.Kupreichik, Cetinje
 1992. Model play from Black.

b) 10 ♗ge2 ♗dc5 11 ♙c2 f5 and:

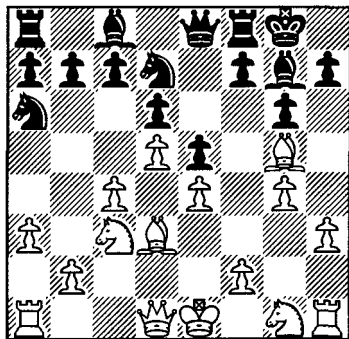


b1) 12 f3 ♗b4! 13 ♙b1 fxe4 14 fxe4
 was P.Soln-E.Bukic, Ljubljana 1997. Gal-
 lagher points out that here 14...♗f7! is
 pretty crushing.

b2) 12 a3 fxe4 13 ♗xe4? (better was
 13 b4 ♗d3+ 14 ♙xd3 exd3 15 ♗xd3 e4
 16 ♗d2 c5!? 17 b5 ♗b4 18 axb4 cxb4 19
 ♗d4 bxc3 20 ♗xc3 with unclear play
 according to Gallagher, while recycling
 the knight and preparing ...a5 with
 16...♗b8!? is also worth a look) 13...♗xe4
 14 ♙xe4 ♗c5 15 ♗c3 (if 15 ♙c2 e4)
 15...b5! 16 ♙e3 (White cannot maintain
 his balance, as 16 cxb5 ♗xe4 17 ♗xe4
 ♗xb5 is great for Black) 16...♗xe4 17
 ♗xe4 bxc4 18 ♖c2 ♗b5 19 0-0-0 ♙d7
 with a winning position for Black in
 I.Zotnikov-J.Gallagher, Arosa 1996.

b3) 12 exf5 gxf5 13 a3 e4 14 ♙e3
 ♗d3+ 15 ♙xd3 exd3 16 ♗f4 (not 16
 ♗xd3 f4) 16...fxg4 17 ♗xd3 g3 (even
 stronger is 17...gxh3, taking a pawn) 18
 ♗d2 gxf2 19 ♗e2 ♙f5 was better for
 Black in N.Eliet-J.Gallagher, Charleville
 2000.

b4) 12 gxf5 gxf5 13 ♗g3 (after 13
 exf5 Black should avoid 13...e4? 14 f6
 and simply play 13...♙xf5 14 ♙xf5 ♖xf5
 15 ♙e3 ♖f3 with the initiative) 13...♗g6
 14 h4 f4 15 ♗f5 ♙xf5 (15...♖xf5 16 exf5
 ♙xf5 is even more accurate) 16 exf5
 ♖xf5! 17 ♙xf5 (17 ♖g1 e4) 17...♗xf5 18
 ♖g1 ♗h8! 19 ♗g4 ♗xg4 20 ♖xg4 h6!
 was P.Soln-M.Tratar, Grize 1996. The
 bishop is trapped and Black will have a
 better endgame.

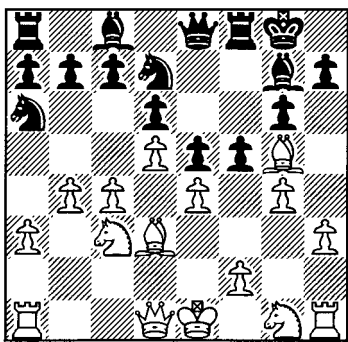


10...♗ac5

This move seems a bit odd at first.
 Black gains time to play ...a5, but the
 knight can still be pushed back. It turns
 out that White's achievement of b2-b4
 is not always a one-sided affair, as his
 advances on both sides of the board can
 leave him feeling a bit overextended.
 Two other moves deserve attention:

a) 10...♖dc5 can be justified if Black's knights do not get pushed back: 11 ♖c2 f5 12 b4 (12 f3 fxe4 13 fxe4 ♖f7 14 ♖e2 may be more challenging) 12...♖xe4 13 ♖xe4 fxe4 14 ♖xe4 ♖b8! 15 ♖e2 a5 16 0-0 ♖d7 17 f3 ♖f6 18 ♖c3 ♖d7?! (better is 18...axb4 19 axb4 ♖d7 when White will have to pay attention to both sides of the board) 19 b5! and White's space and control of e4 gave him a pleasant advantage in B.Damljanovic-M.Sollefeld, Andorra 2004.

b) 10...f5 is actually the most common move. Black has not scored well, but it looks viable if Black is accurate. After 11 b4 (here 11 f3 is well met by 11...♖ac5 12. ♖c2 fxe4 13 fxe4 ♖f7 14 ♖e2 a5!) Black has:



b1) 11...f4 12 ♖h4! (White keeps the f3-square available for his knight; instead 12 f3 ♖f6 is not so clear) 12...♖f6 13 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 14 ♖f3 c5 15 dxc6 bxc6 16 c5! dxc5 17 ♖c4+ ♖g7 18 ♖a4 was very good for White in E.Bareev-J.Gallagher, German League 1999.

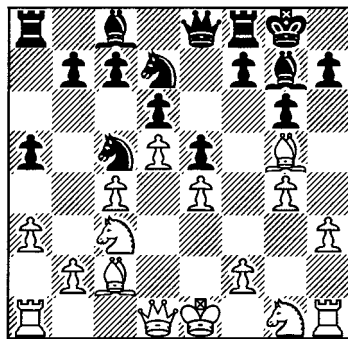
b2) 11...fxe4!? 12 ♖xe4 ♖f6 13 ♖f3 (13 ♖e2!?) 13...♖xe4 14 ♖xe4 ♖b8! 15

♖e3 ♖d7 16 g5 ♖b6 17 ♖d2 ♖f5 and Black had excellent play in Z.Ksieski-J.Howell, Liechtenstein 1994.

b3) 11...♖f6 12 f3 c6 (White has a lot of space, so Black must chip away) 13 ♖b3 cxd5 14 cxd5 ♖d7 15 0-0 was A.Yermolinsky-T.Shaked, Newark 1995. Now 15...fxe4 16 fxe4 (instead 16 ♖xe4? loses to 16...♖a4 and 16 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 17 fxe4 ♖c7 is good for Black) 16...♖c7 is unclear. White has more space, but his king position is rather airy.

11 ♖c2 a5

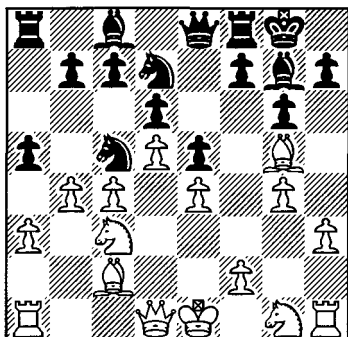
Black can also play 11...f5 12 f3 (after 12 b4?! ♖xe4 13 ♖xe4 fxe4 14 ♖xe4 Black does not have to recycle the knight from b8 to d7, and 14...a5 already gives him the initiative) 12...fxe4 13 fxe4 ♖f6 (Black could consider 13...♖f7 14 ♖e2 a5 or 13...a5 14 ♖e2 ♖b6!) 14 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 15 b4 ♖a6?! (better is 15...♖cd7 when White has space, but his king may not find an ideal home) 16 ♖d2 ♖f7 17 0-0-0 ♖d7 18 ♖ge2 ♖b6 19 ♖b3 was good for White in M.Kazhgaleyev-S.Martinovic, Sibenik 2009; Black's knights are both poorly placed.



12 ♖ge2

It turns out that this move is hardly ideal. Instead 12 ♖b5 would be met by 12...♗a6 with the idea of ...♗b6, while after 12 ♖f3 ♗b6! Black is all set for his standard plans with ...f5, ...a4 or ...♗d7 followed by ...♗ba4.

The critical move is considered to be 12 b4.



Here Black has:

a) 12...axb4 13 axb4 ♖xa1 14 ♖xa1 ♗a6 15 ♖a3 f5 16 exf5 e4! leads to complications: 17 fxg6 (Black has good play after 17 ♗xe4 gxf5 18 gxf5 ♖xf5 with the idea of ...♗e5) 17...♖xg6 18 ♗e3 (or 18 ♗c1 ♖f6 19 ♗xe4 ♖d4 20 ♖b3 b5! 21 cxb5 ♗xb4 with the initiative) 18...♗e5 19 ♗xe4 (19 ♖b3 ♗d3+ 20 ♗xd3 exd3) 19...♗xc4 20 ♖b3 ♗xe3 21 fxe3 ♖h6! 22 ♗e2 ♗xg4 23 ♗f4 ♖h4+ 24 ♗f2?! (better is 24 ♗d2 with an unclear position) 24...♗f3 25 ♖g1 ♖xf4? (25...♗h8!? would have retained the initiative) 26 exf4 ♖e7+ 27 ♗d2! ♖e2+ 28 ♗c1 ♖xf2 was E.Dearing-A.David, French League 2006. Here 29 ♖xg7+! ♗xg7 30 ♖b2+ would win instantly, as

30...♗f8 (moving to a light square loses the queen, while 30...♗h6 31 ♖f6+ ♗h5 32 ♖g5 is mate) 31 ♖h8+ is mate in 9...

b) 12...♗a6! is untried, but looks good. After 13 ♖b1 (this may not be necessary yet, but ...♗b6 will attack c4 and protect the a8-rook: for example, 13 ♖ge2 ♗b6! and both the b4- and c4-pawns are attacked, or 13 ♖e2 axb4 14 axb4 ♗b6 15 b5 when both 15...♗c5 and 15...♗b4 look fine) 13...♗b6 14 ♖e2 axb4 15 axb4 f5 and Black has excellent play.

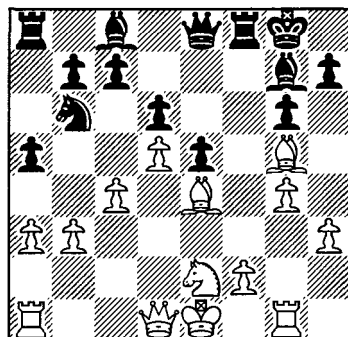
12...♗b6!

So often in the h3 lines this 'ugly' move turns out to be quite good.

13 b3 f5 14 ♖g1

Black also has very good play after 14 gxf5 gxf5 15 ♖g1 (or 15 exf5 ♗xf5) 15...♗h8.

14...fxe4 15 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 16 ♗xe4



16...a4!

Black chips away at the white structure. White would love to advance his b-pawn, but then c4 would drop immediately.

17 ♗c3 axb3 18 ♖xb3 ♗d7

Black is also doing well after Hazai's suggestion 18...♗a4.

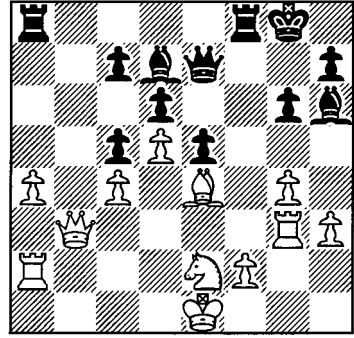
19 ♖e3 b6 20 ♖a2 ♜e7

Both 20...♗c5 and 20...♗f6 are good alternatives.

21 ♜g3 ♗c5 22 ♖xc5 bxc5 23 a4 ♖h6 24 ♗e2

24...♖d7

Black could also play 24...♖g5 with the idea of ...♖h4, but 24...♖a6! looks best. Black threatens ...♜ab8-b4 and if 25 ♗c3 ♜g5, with the idea 26 ♜c2 ♜f4 27 ♜f3 ♜h2, White's position is coming apart at the seams.



25 ♜c2 ♖f4 26 ♜f3 ♜a5 27 ♗c3 ♜fa8

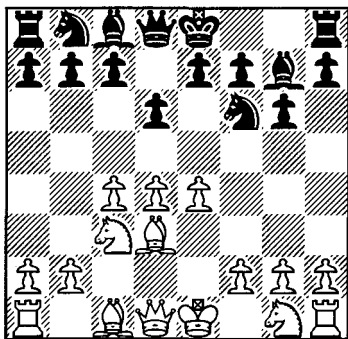
Black is still better, but a draw was agreed in E.Agrest-V.Milov, Ohrid 2001.

Chapter 12

Seirawan Variation

5 ♖d3

1 d4 ♟f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♞c3 ♜g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♖d3



This variation is quite popular. It has long been a favourite of Seirawan, while it has also been played frequently by I.Sokolov, Dreev, Marin, Atalik, V.Georgiev and several other grandmasters. White develops in a natural way, but the d4-square is less well defended than it is in other lines against the King's Indian.

5...0-0 6 ♜ge2 ♝c6

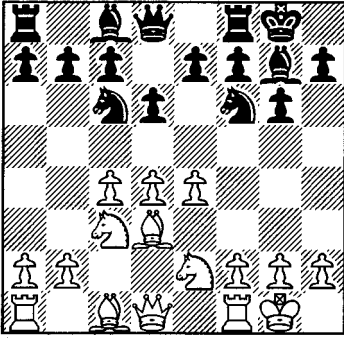
This move is very natural and direct.

Black has other ideas here as well, but we will stick with the main approach, which fits in well with the rest of the repertoire. Black attacks the centre with his pieces and will soon strike with ...e5.

7 0-0

This is almost universally played. Instead 7 d5 ♞e5 allows Black to grab the bishop-pair, while 7 f4 would hardly dissuade 7...e5. Against slow approaches such as 7 a3, 7 h3 or 7 ♜c2, 7...e5 is also appropriate. 7 f3 is fine, but there is no need for White to commit so early. After 7...e5 (or 7...♞d7 8 ♜e3 e5 9 d5 ♞d4) 8 d5 ♞d4 9 ♜e3 Black can play 9...♞d7 or 9...♞h5 which will bring us back into the main lines.

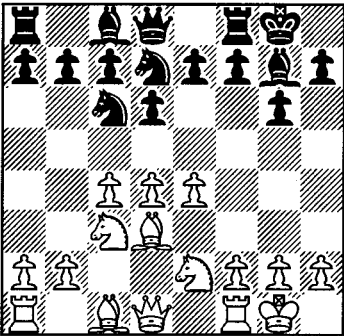
Here Black has an interesting choice. The classical approach is to play the immediate 7...e5 intending to bring the knight into d4, which may well be best. Black can delay this advance for a moment and play 7...♞d7 to attack the d4-pawn.



Finally, the modern approach is to play 7...♗h5, in which case Black will often retreat the c6-knight to e7 in the hope of playing on the kingside. This is the most ambitious approach, but it is also strategically risky.

- A: 7...♗d7
- B: 7...♗h5
- C: 7...e5

A) 7...♗d7



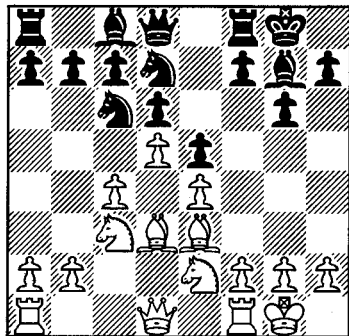
This is a logical move. With the e4-pawn well protected, the knight did little on f6, so Black retreats it to a flexible square and attacks the d4-pawn. Black

will then play ...e5 and after White's d4-d5, the knight can go to d4 or e7.

8 ♖e3

Instead 8 d5 ♗ce5 9 f4 ♗xd3 10 ♖xd3 ♗c5 does not look dangerous, but the typical prophylactic move 8 ♖c2 must be considered. After 8...e5 (a mysterious alternative is 8...a6 intending a Panno-esque ...♖b8 and b5) 9 d5 ♗d4 10 ♗xd4 (10 ♖e3 would transpose to the main line) 10...exd4 11 ♗b5 ♗e5 12 ♗xd4 (after 12 ♖b3 c5 13 dxc6 ♗xc6! White's minor pieces are misplaced and 14 ♖f4 ♖e5 gives Black a very comfortable game) 12...♗xc4 (sacrificing a pawn with 12...c5 13 dxc6 bxc6 14 ♖b3 ♖a6 is also possible – we will see more of this idea again) 13 ♖b1 is a bit dull, but Black should not experience any real problems: 13...♗e5 (13...♖d7 14 b3 ♗b6 15 ♖e3 looks a bit better for White, but 13...♖e8 14 b3 ♗e5 is also fine) 14 ♖d2 (or 14 f4 ♗g4 15 h3 c5 16 dxc6 ♖b6 with play) 14...c5 15 dxc6 bxc6 16 ♖c3 c5 17 ♗e2 ♖a6 and Black had good play in V.Hort-Su.Polgar, Monte Carlo 1994.

8...e5 9 d5

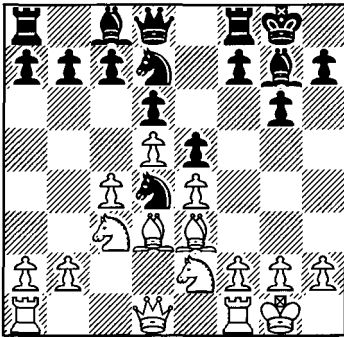


9...♖d4

The less-common 9...♖e7 has scored well, but I think Black is better off with a central approach. After 10 ♖d2 (if 10 ♖g3 Black could even try 10...h5!) 10...f5 11 exf5 Black has:

a) 11...♖xf5 12 ♔g5 ♕f6 13 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 14 ♖ae1 with some advantage for White in J.Nogueiras-A.Zapata, Havana 1982. This type of structure is usually okay for Black, but here White has a rather threatening lead in development.

b) 11...gxf5 12 f4 ♖g6 13 ♖ae1 e4 14 ♖c2 ♖f6 15 h3 ♖h8 16 c5?! ♖g8 17 cxd6 cxd6 18 ♖d4 ♖h4 19 ♖f2 was drawn here in A.Dreev-F.Amonatov, Dagomys 2009. White's play was not too incisive, however, and both 16 ♖d4 and 16 ♖h2!? look very pleasant for him.



10 ♖c2!?

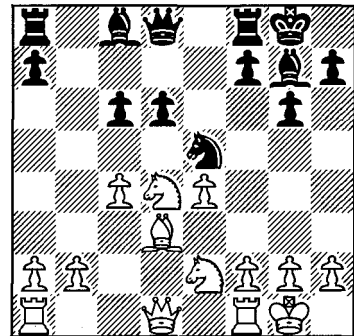
This is a bit of a fashionable continuation. White is willing to exchange bishop for knight to reduce Black's dynamism. There are plenty of alternatives:

a) 10 ♖b1 also looks to force the knight from d4, but the bishop will have

to move again soon: 10...♖xe2+ (or 10...c5!?) 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 ♖xd4 exd4 13 ♖xd4 ♖e5 with the idea of ...♖a6) 11 ♖xe2 a5 (this is more solid than 11...f5 when White should avoid 12 f3? f4 and play the thematic 12 exf5 gxf5 when both 13 f4 and 13 f3!? leave him with some advantage) 12 ♖c2 ♖c5 was V.Arbakov-I.Belov, Katowice 1990, where White had a minimal edge at best. This is very similar to variation 'e', below.

b) 10 ♖d2 c5 (more ambitious than 10...♖c5 11 ♖b1 ♖xe2+ 12 ♖xe2 a5 when 13 ♖c2 transposes to variation 'a') 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 b4 (or 12 ♖ad1 ♖c5 13 ♖b1 ♖ce6) 12...c5 13 b5 f5! 14 ♖g5 ♖f6 15 ♖h6 ♖f7 16 f4 ♖b7 with sharp play in B.Chatalbashev-I.Smirin, Athens 2007.

c) 10 ♖xd4 actually wins a pawn, but Black gets excellent play after 10...exd4 11 ♖b5 ♖e5 12 ♖bxd4 c5 13 dxc6 bxc6 when he will play ...♖a6 planning ...d5.



Moreover, White will have trouble with his c4-pawn and d3-bishop:

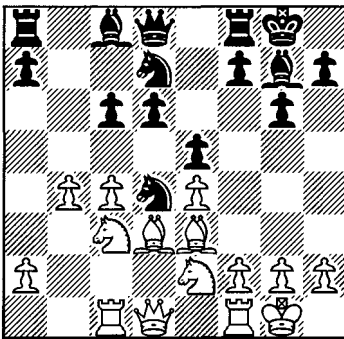
c1) 14 ♖c2 ♖a6 15 ♖ad1 ♖e8 (or 15...d5) 16 b3 d5 17 exd5 cxd5 18 ♖f3!?

♗xf3+ 19 gxf3 was M.Taha-P.Konguvel, Kuala Lumpur 1993. 19...♙c8! would give more than enough for the pawn.

c2) 14 ♖b1 ♖a6 15 b3 d5 16 exd5 cxd5 17 ♗b5 ♙e8!? (or 17...♗xd3 18 ♚xd3 dxc4 19 ♚xd8 ♙fxd8 20 bxc4 ♙ac8 with the initiative in the ending) 18 c5? (this backfires, but Black is also better after 18 ♗ec3 ♙c8) 18...♚e7! 19 ♗f4 ♗xd3 20 ♚xd3 ♚xc5 21 a4 ♖xb5 (or 21...d4) 22 axb5 was A.Kulikov-V.Gerber, USSR 1987. Now 22...d4 would give Black a big advantage, as the b5-pawn will soon drop.

c3) 14 ♙c1 ♖a6 (Black also had good play after the less direct 14...♚b6 15 b3 a5 16 ♖b1 a4 17 h3 axb3 18 axb3 ♖b7 19 ♗h1 ♗d7 20 ♖c2 d5 21 exd5 cxd5 22 cxd5 ♗f6 in J.Sunye Neto-C.Arduman, Moscow Olympiad 1994) 15 b3 d5 16 exd5 cxd5 17 ♗b5 ♗xd3 18 ♚xd3 dxc4 19 ♚xd8 ♙axd8 20 bxc4 ♙d2 21 ♗ec3 ♖xc3 with a draw in H.Isigkeit-D.Hamilton, correspondence 1998.

d) 10 ♙c1 c5 (more ambitious than 10...♗c5 11 ♖b1 ♗xe2+ 12 ♚xe2 a5 13 ♖c2) 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 b4 and now:



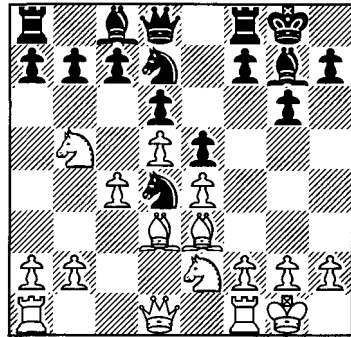
d1) 12...f5 13 exf5 gxf5 14 ♖xd4!?! (14 f4) 14...exd4 15 ♗a4 was S.Agdestein-S.Dolmatov, Tilburg 1993. Here 15...c5 looks best, with unclear play.

d2) 12...c5 13 bxc5 (instead 13 a3 ♗b6 is unclear) 13...dxc5 with a fairly level position in A.Poluljahov-E.Kobylkin, Krasnodar 1997.

d3) 12...♖b7 13 ♖b1 (or 13 ♚d2 a5 14 b5 ♗c5 15 ♖b1 ♗ce6 with counterplay, J.Pinter-A.Groszpeter, Hungarian League 1997) 13...c5 14 bxc5 dxc5 is similar to variation 'd2'.

d4) 12...♖b8 13 a3 a5 14 ♖b1 axb4 (or 14...♖b7!?) 15 axb4 f5 16 exf5 gxf5 with messy play in N.Borne-I.Nataf, Paris 2006.

e) 10 ♗b5!?! is another way for White to challenge the d4-knight.



Black has to decide where to exchange:

e1) 10...♗xb5 11 cxb5 f5 12 f3?! (better is 12 exf5 gxf5 13 f3 with unclear play in Wang Yaoyao-Xie Jun, Suzhou 2006) 12...f4 13 ♖f2 g5 14 ♙c1 ♙f7 15 ♙c3 ♗f6 16 ♚c2 ♗e8 17 ♗h1 h5 with attacking chances in S.Skembris-

N.Borge, Copenhagen 1995.

e2) 10...♘xe2+ 11 ♙xe2 (White could also play 11 ♖xe2!? a6 12 ♘c3 when 12...f5 13 exf5 gxf5 14 f3 looks better for him, so perhaps Black should try 12...a5!?) and here:

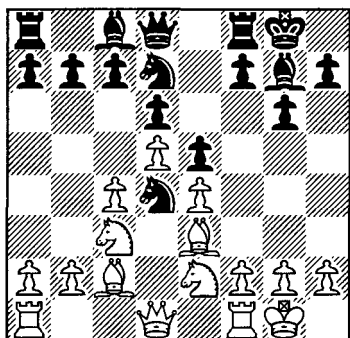
e21) 11...f5 12 exf5 (12 f3 a6 13 ♘c3 is variation 'a23') 12...gxf5 13 ♙xa7! is a safe pawn-grab, because 13...c6 14 dxc6 bxc6 is met by 15 ♙e3! cxb5 (or 15...f4 16 ♙c1) 16 ♖d5+.

e22) 11...♘c5 12 f3 (12 ♘c3 a5 is similar) 12...a5 with a typical position that is a little better for White, M.Marin-V.Spasov, Budapest 1993.

e23) 11...a6 12 ♘c3 f5 13 f3 (better is 13 exf5), and here Black could consider 13...f4!? 14 ♙f2 ♙f6!? with the idea of ...♙h4.

e24) 11...a5 12 ♖d2 ♘c5 13 ♘c3 b6 14 f3 f5 15 exf5 ♙xf5!? (15...gxf5 16 f4) 16 ♖ac1 with perhaps a slight advantage for White in S.Kiselev-A.Kuzmin, Moscow 1991.

Returning to 10 ♙c2:

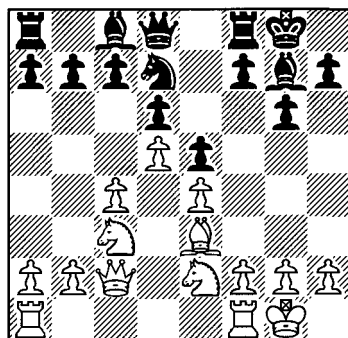


10...♘xc2

Black may as well grab the bishop.

Instead 10...♘xe2+ 11 ♖xe2 gives White a better version of positions like those in variation 'a' above.

11 ♖xc2



11...f5

This is the most aggressive, but Black can also consider:

a) 11...a5 is a typical idea: 12 a3 b6 13 b4 f5 14 exf5 gxf5 15 f3 (15 f4!?) 15...♙a6!? (a complex strategic battle arises after 15...f4!? 16 ♙f2 ♘f6 17 ♙h4 when White will trade off his second bishop to control the e4-square) 16 b5 (16 ♘b5!?) 16...♙c8 17 f4 ♘c5 18 ♖ad1 ♙d7 19 ♘g3 ♖h4 20 ♘ce2 ♖ae8 21 fxe5 ♙xe5 22 ♙f4 ♙g7 23 ♘d4 was drawn in A.Moiseenko-I.Smirin, Maalot-Tarshiha 2008.

b) 11...a6!? and now:

b1) 12 b4 f5 13 f3 (13 exf5 gxf5 14 f4 looks more thematic) 13...f4 14 ♙f2 g5 15 c5 g4!? (Black forces matters, but 15...♘f6 16 cxd6 cxd6 17 ♘a4 g4 18 ♘b6 ♖b8 was an alternative) 16 fxg4 ♖g5 with counterplay in M.Bensdorp-J.Van der Wiel, Wijk aan Zee 2006. If 17 h3 h5 18 gxh5 ♘f6 gives attacking chances.

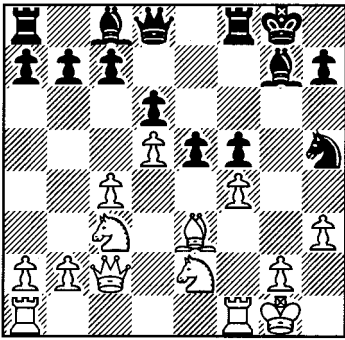
b2) 12 ♖ae1 ♗h8 13 ♜d2 f5 14 exf5 gxf5 15 f4 e4 16 ♔d4 ♜f6 17 ♞d1 with a complicated game in M.Marin-Z.Kozul, Sitges 1991.

12 exf5 gxf5 13 f4 ♜f6

Black could also consider the immediate 13...e4.

14 h3 ♜h5

Again 14...e4 comes into consideration, as does the flexible 14...♔d7.



15 ♜d2

White strengthens his control of the f4-square, but this does give Black some freedom. A couple of alternatives:

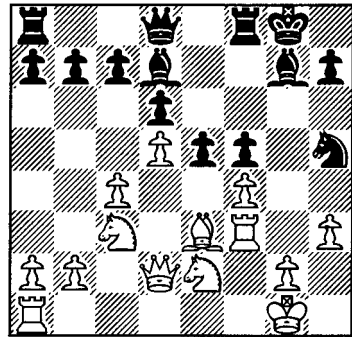
a) 15 c5 is very direct: 15...exf4 (it may be better to play 15...♖f7!? 16 ♜d2 ♔d7 17 ♖ad1 ♜f8 with unclear play in Z.Peng-C.Foisor, Kishinev 1995) 16 ♜xf4 ♜xf4 17 ♔xf4 (if 17 ♖xf4 ♔e5) 17...♔d4+ 18 ♗h2 ♔xc5 (not 18...dxc5? 19 ♜b5) 19 ♖f3 ♖f7 (19...♔d7!? develops and stops ♜b5 ideas, but White still has good compensation) 20 ♖g3+ ♖g7 (if 20...♗h8? 21 ♜b5! with the idea of ♜c3+) 21 ♖xg7+ ♗xg7 22 ♜a4! ♔d4 (Black should probably try 22...b6!? with the idea 23 b4 ♔xb4 24 ♜b2+ ♜f6!, but

instead 23 ♜xc5 bxc5 24 ♖e1 leaves White with the initiative) 23 ♖c1 ♔d7 24 ♜xc7 and White had a big advantage in Y.Seirawan-L.Van Wely, Wijk aan Zee 1995.

b) 15 ♖ae1 ♔d7 16 c5 ♗h8 17 ♜b3! ♖g8 (White keeps an edge after 17...exf4 18 ♜xf4 ♜xf4 19 ♖xf4 ♔e5 20 ♖f3) 18 ♜xb7 ♖b8 19 ♜xa7 ♖xb2 (Black could also try 19...♖a8 20 ♜b7 ♖b8 with the idea 21 ♖a6 exf4 22 ♜xf4 ♖xb2!, since if 23 ♜xh5 ♔xc3) 20 ♖a3 (20 c6!? is likely more critical, although Palliser points out that Black is active enough after 20...♔c8 21 ♖a3 exf4 22 ♜xf4 ♜xf4 23 ♔xf4 and now 23...♖xg2+!? 24 ♗xg2 ♔xc3+ is a tempting possibility) 20...exf4 21 ♜xf4 ♜xf4 22 ♖xf4 ♖c2 23 ♜e2 was V.Malakhov-V.Tkachiev, Benidorm (rapid) 2007. Here Mikhalevski suggests 23...dxc5! with good play.

15...♔d7 16 ♖f3

From here the rook may move along the third rank. Alternatives were 16 ♖ae1 and 16 ♖ad1.

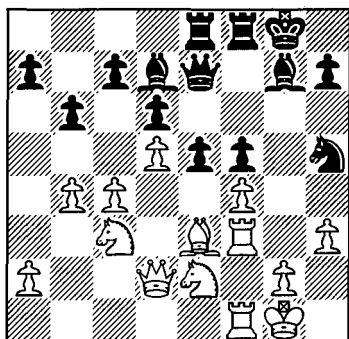


16...♜e7

Black keeps the tension. 16...e4!? was

again possible, while 16...♖e8 17 ♖af1 ♗g6 18 c5 ♘h8 19 b4 was agreed drawn in V.Georgiev-M.Roeder, Saint Vincent 2002, although Palliser feels that Black should have continued with 19...♗g8.

17 ♖af1 ♖ae8 18 b4 b6



19 ♗b5 ♙xb5

It was definitely a good time to play 19...e4! 20 ♖f2 a6! 21 ♗xc7 ♖c8 22 ♗e6 (22 ♗xa6?! ♖xc4) 22...♙xe6 23 dxe6 ♗xe6 24 ♖c1 b5 with a good position for Black according to Golubev. A similar idea is 19...a6 when White has to retreat or play 20 ♗xc7 e4, transposing to 19...e4.

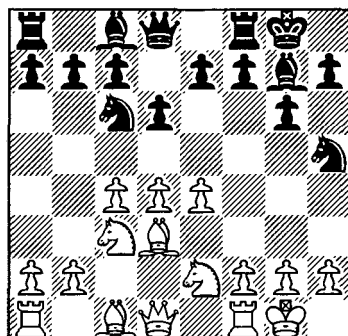
20 cxb5 ♗d7 21 a4 ♗f6

Or 21...e4 22 ♖f2 a6!? 23 bxa6 ♗xa4 with good play.

22 ♗c3 e4 23 ♖g3 h6 24 ♙d4 ♘h7 25 ♗e2

Now 25...♖f7?! 26 ♖c1 ♖ee7 was S.Atalik-T.Radjabov, Crete 2007. Here Golubev suggests the continuation 27 ♖gc3 with the idea of ♗g3. Instead Black could have played 25...♖g8 26 ♖c1 ♗f7 with good play, as the d5-pawn will need tending to.

B) 7...♗h5



This is the most-fashionable continuation. Black attacks the d4-pawn as he did in Line A, but here the knight takes up a post on the kingside. Black will still follow up with ...e5, but here the c6-knight will generally retreat to e7 to help support Black's kingside campaign. White now has a choice:

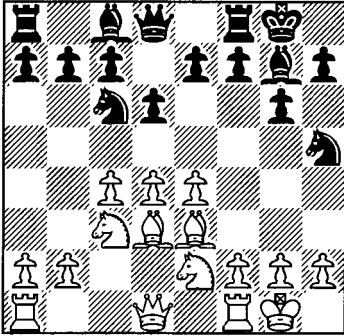
B1: 8 ♙e3

B2: 8 ♙c2

White has also tried 8 d5 a few times, but this does not look very dangerous. After 8...♗e5 9 f4 ♗xd3 10 ♗xd3 White hopes that Black's knight is off-side and that his extra space will offset the bishop-pair. However, after 10...c5 (or 10...f5 11 ♗d4 c5 12 dxc6 bxc6 13 ♙e3 ♙d7 with unclear play in M.Van der Werf-J.Gallagher, Cannes 1997) 11 ♙d2 f5! Black is able to make use of his seventh move after all by striking quickly on the light squares. Following 12 ♖ae1 e6 13 ♗g3 ♗xg3 14 ♗xg3 fxe4 15 ♗xe4 (or 15 ♖xe4 e5) 15...exd5 16

cx d5 ♙xb2 White had little to show for the pawn in M.Van der Werf-I.Rogers, Dutch League 1996.

B1) 8 ♙e3



This is a very natural move, but considering Black will play a quick ...f5, the bishop is a bit of a target here, both for Black's f-pawn and from a possible ...♗xf5.

8...e5 9 d5 ♘e7

This is consistent with 7...♗h5, but 9...♗d4 is also possible:

a) 10 ♙xd4 exd4 11 ♗b5 c6 12 dxc6 bxc6 13 ♗bxd4 c5 and Black wins back the pawn, A.Mendelson-S.Collins, Bunnratty 2005.

b) 10 ♙b1 ♗xe2+ 11 ♗xe2 f5 (Black could also try 11...♗f4!?) 12 exf5 was drawn here in E.Bareev-S.Dolmatov, Elista 1997, but 12...gxf5 13 f3 gives White a slight advantage.

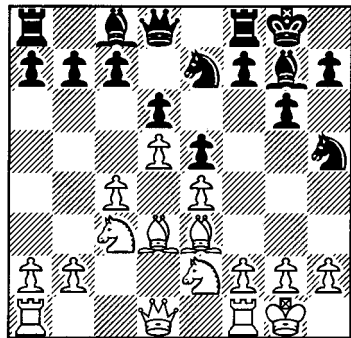
c) 10 ♙c2 ♗xc2 11 ♗xc2 f5 12 exf5 (better than 12 f3 f4 13 ♙f2 g5 with the idea of ...♗f6 and ...g4) 12...gxf5 (12...♙xf5 is also playable) 13 f4 ♙d7 14 ♗ae1 was fairly level in L.Christiansen-

J.Nunn, San Francisco 1995. After 14...♗f6 the position is very similar to the main line of A – here the moves ♗ae1 and ...♙d7 have also been played.

d) 10 ♗c1 a6?! 11 b4 ♗e8 12 ♙b1 ♗xe2+ 13 ♗xe2 f5 14 exf5 gxf5 15 f3 f4?! 16 ♙f2 ♙f5 17 ♙xf5 ♗xf5 18 ♗c3 gave White a very pleasant advantage in G.Tunik-A.Fedorov, Minsk 1995. Instead 10...c5! would have been thematic and good.

e) 10 ♗d2 c5 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 b4 ♙e6 13 b5 f5 14 ♙g5 ♗d7 with an unclear position in Y.Seirawan-R.Kasimdzhanov, Bled Olympiad 2002.

f) 10 ♗b5 ♗xe2+ (or 10...♗xb5 11 cxb5 f5 12 exf5 gxf5 13 f3 with a slight edge, as played in H.Steingrimsson-R.Polzin, German League 2003) 11 ♙xe2 ♗f4 12 ♙f3 b6 13 a4 a5 gave Black a solid position in E.Bareev-L.Van Wely, Las Vegas 2009.



10 ♗d2

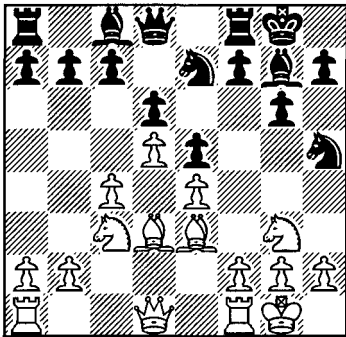
This is very natural, but White has tried some other things as well:

a) 10 a4 is a normal idea, but it does not seem to be worth the tempo here:

10...f5 11 exf5 gxf5 12 f4 exf4 13 ♖xf4 ♗xf4 14 ♙xf4 ♘g6 15 ♙d2 ♖h4 16 ♗e1 ♗d4+ 17 ♗e3 ♙d7 18 ♗xd4 ♙xd4+ 19 ♖h1 ♗e5 20 ♙e2 ♘g4 and Black had excellent piece play in V.Malakhov-L.Ding, Sochi 2009.

b) 10 c5 f5 11 f3 f4 12 ♙f2 g5 (White's play looks risky, as he will hardly be able to stop ...g4, but he may be fast enough on the queenside) 13 ♖c1 (White should consider 13 h3!? as Black will have to move his knight again: for example, 13...♗f6 14 ♖c1 ♘g6 15 cxd6 cxd6 16 ♗b5 ♖f7 17 ♗xa7 and White is well ahead) 13...g4 14 cxd6 cxd6 15 ♖h1 (if 15 ♗b5 gxf3 16 gxf3 ♙h3) 15...♘g6 16 ♗b5 g3 17 ♙g1 ♗h4 and Black had serious attacking chances in A.Jedlicka-O.Spirin, Teplice 2010.

c) 10 ♘g3!?

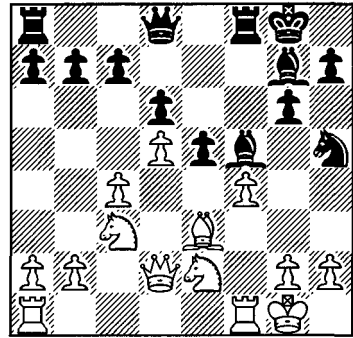


10...♗f4 (this is tempting, but the knight does not do much here on its own, so Black should consider 10...♘g3!?) 11 ♙c2 f5 12 f3 (or 12 exf5!?) 12...♘g2 (it is hard to suggest anything else) 13 ♖xg2 f4 14 ♙d2 fxg3 15 hxg3 and White was better in

D.Reinderman-D.Brandenburg, Hilversum 2008.

10...f5 11 exf5

White can also open the position with 11 f4!? fxe4 12 ♙xe4 (12 ♗xe4 ♗f5) 12...♗f5 13 ♙xf5 ♙xf5 and now:



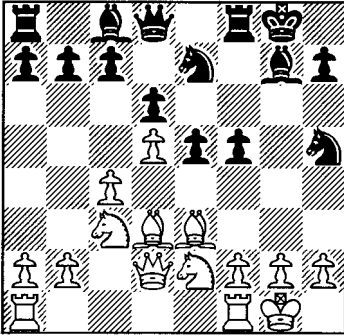
a) 14 ♖ae1 ♙d7 15 fxe5 dxe5 16 ♙g5 ♗e8 17 ♗d4 ♗g6 18 ♗e6 ♙xe6 19 dxe6 ♗xe6 20 ♗d5 ♖h8 21 ♗f2 ♗g6 22 ♗h4 h6 23 ♙d2 f4 24 ♙c3 ♖ae8 25 ♗xc7 was H.Nezad-G.Jones, Gibraltar 2011. Here 25...♗b6+ 26 ♖f2 ♗xc7 27 ♗xh5 ♗xc4 looks okay for Black.

b) 14 fxe5 ♙xe5 15 ♙d4 ♗h4 (instead 15...♗e7 16 ♙xe5 ♗xe5 was P.Prohaszka-W.Paschall, Budapest 2006, and here 17 ♖ae1! with the idea of 17...♙d7 18 ♗f4 ♗g7 19 ♗e6 looks good for White) 16 ♙xe5 dxe5 17 b3 ♗f6 was solid, if a bit dull for Black in D.Kolbus-A.Kuzmin, Biel 2002.

11...gxf5

Black can also consider 11...♗f5. This structure often proves to be very solid for him, but here he lags in development a bit: 12 ♙g5 ♙f6 13 ♙xf6 ♗xf6 (or 13...♗xf6!?) 14 ♗e4 ♗e7 (Black could

also stay on the a1-h8 diagonal with 14...♞g7; after 15 c5 ♖f6 16 ♖ac1 White was only a little better in J.Piket-J.Polgar, Amsterdam 1995) 15 f4 exf4 (it was safer to play 15...♖f6) 16 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 17 ♖xf4 ♖d7 18 ♖af1 and White had the initiative in S.Skembris-M.Cebalo, Bratto 2000.



12 f4

This is White's main idea, but other moves have been tried as well:

a) 12 f3 ♖h8 13 c5 f4 14 ♖f2 ♖f5 15 ♖d6 cxd6 16 ♖e4 ♖g8 with unclear play in S.Videki-T.Shaked, Budapest 1997.

b) 12 ♖g3 ♖f6! (if 12...♖f4 13 ♖xf4 exf4 14 ♖h5!) 13 f4 ♖g4 14 fxe5 ♖xe3 15 ♞xe3 ♖xe5 gives Black good counterplay: 16 ♞g5+ ♖h8 17 ♖f3 ♖d7 18 ♖af1 ♖g6! 19 ♞xd8 ♖axd8 20 ♖xf5? (also bad was 20 ♖xf5? ♖h4, so 20 ♖ge2 had to be played) 20...♖xc3 21 ♖xc3 ♖e5 and Black won material in V.Georgiev-R.Kasimdzhanov, German League 1999.

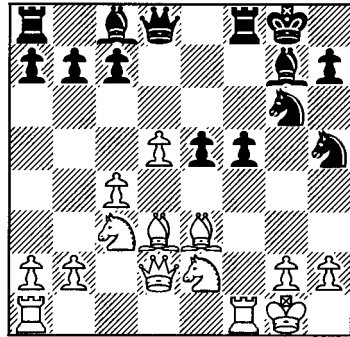
c) 12 ♖g5 f4! (Black gives up the e4-square to gain some room for his own pieces) 13 f3 ♞d7 (a bit extravagant; I

would prefer 13...♖f6 14 ♖xf6 ♖xf6) 14 ♖xe7 (14 g4!? is more testing, as 14...fxg3 15 hxg3 ♞h3? fails to 16 ♖xe7 ♖xg3 17 ♖xg3 ♞xg3+ 18 ♞g2 and 14...♖f6 15 ♖e4 looks a little better for White) 14...♞xe7 15 ♞c2 ♖h6 16 ♖ae1 ♖f7 17 ♖e4 ♖h8 and Black was ready to create counterplay on the g-file in L.Christiansen-J.Gallagher, Bern 1996.

12...♖g6 13 fxe5

White forces the pace. Instead 13 g3 leads to unclear play after 13...♖d7 (or 13...exf4 14 ♖xf4 ♖hxf4 15 gxf4 ♞h4 16 ♖f3 a6 17 ♖af1 ♖d7, M.Roeder-M.Borzakian, Le Touquet 2004) 14 ♖ae1 a6 15 b3 exf4 16 ♖xf4 ♖gxf4 17 gxf4 ♞h4, as in G.Tunik-E.Mochalov, Orel 1995.

13...dxe5



The position is very double-edged, but I suspect White has good chances here with accurate play. Black's pawn duo may look imposing, but they are difficult to advance without creating weaknesses. Black would like to complete his development with ...♞d6 and ...♖d7, but this is not so easy to achieve.

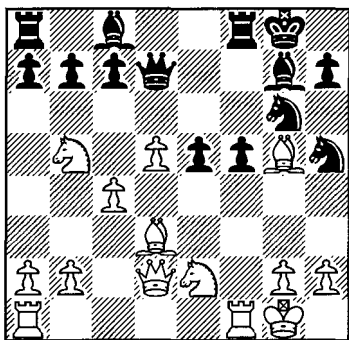
14 ♖g5

White could also play the prophylactic 14 ♖c2!?

14...♗d6 15 ♖b5!

Instead 15 ♖h1 is a bit slow: 15...e4 16 ♖c2 ♖e5 17 ♖b5 (or 17 b3 ♖g4 18 g3 ♖d7 and Black has a good position) 17...♗g6? (better is 17...♗c5) 18 ♖b3 and Black had difficulties in F.Gonzalez Velez-D.Martinez, Barbera 2000.

15...♗d7



16 ♖g3!?

Instead 16 ♖c2 a6 17 ♖bc3 ♗d6 18 ♖a4!? is an idea, while 16 d6!? cxd6 17 ♖c2 e4 18 ♖xd6 ♖xb2 19 ♖ab1 ♖e5 20 c5 gives White good compensation for the pawn.

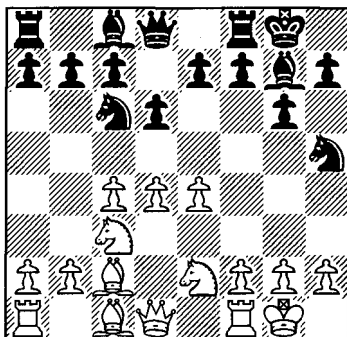
16...♖xg3 17 hxg3 a6 18 ♖c3 ♗d6 19 ♖e2 ♖d7

Black has reached his desired set-up and achieved good counterplay in G.Tunik-Y.Shulman, Minsk 1995.

B2) 8 ♖c2

White protects the d4-pawn without committing his c1-bishop. This move is more popular than Line B1 and has the

subtle virtue of clearing a piece from White's third rank.



8...e5 9 d5 ♖e7

Here 9...♖d4? would just lose a pawn after 10 ♖xd4 exd4 11 ♖b5.

10 a4

This has developed into White's main weapon. The advance of the a-pawn gains space on the queenside and also prepares a possible rook lift. Other moves are less popular:

a) 10 ♖e3 f5 11 exf5 ♖xf5! 12 ♖xf5 gxf5 was D.Yevseev-A.David, Groningen 1995. We have a familiar structure (the position is similar to both Atalik-Radjabov and Christiansen-Nunn, above), but here White's queen is on d1 instead of c2, which certainly does not harm Black.

b) 10 b4 seems a bit irrelevant: 10...f5 11 exf5 gxf5 12 ♖g3 ♖xg3 (or 12...♖f4!?) 13 fxg3 e4 14 ♖b2 ♖g6 15 ♖b1 ♖e5 and Black had counterplay in A.Bets-M.Golubev, Alushta 1999.

c) 10 ♖b1 f5 11 exf5 gxf5 (I would prefer 11...♖xf5!?) 12 f4 ♖g6 13 fxe5 dxe5. This structure looks favourable to

White, although after 14 c5 ♖h8 15 b4 f4 16 ♖e4 ♗g4 Black had possibilities for kingside counterplay in D.Feletar-J.Gallagher, Pula 2000.

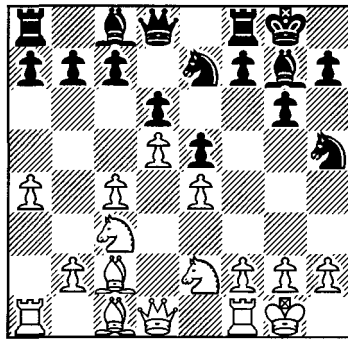
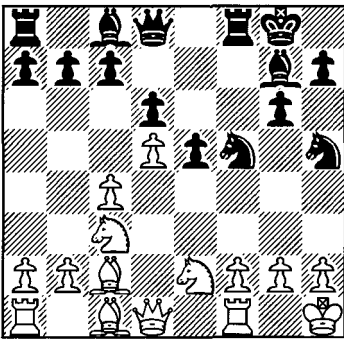
d) The semi-waiting move 10 ♖h1 is White's most common alternative. After 10...f5 11 exf5 Black has:

d1) 11...gxf5 12 ♖g1!? (12 ♖g3 ♖f4 13 ♖h5 ♖xh5 14 ♗xh5 ♗d7 looks okay for Black, but White could also try the thematic 12 f4) 12...♖f6 13 f4 e4 14 ♖h3 was S.Atalik-R.Polzin, Kallithea 2003. Here Atalik suggests 14...c6 15 a4 cxd5 16 cxd5 with just an edge for White, but this looks quite playable for Black to me.

d2) With a knight on e7, Black should always consider the recapture 11...♖xf5!?

(or 16...b5!? with counterplay) 17 h3?! (this looks like a bit of a nothing move, but 17 f4 ♗ae8 looks fine for Black) 17...♗ae8 (17...♗f6 equalizes, as White's bishop lacks a good retreat) 18 ♗d3 (Black has good compensation for the pawn after 18 ♗a5 c5 19 ♗xa7 b5 according to Gallagher) 18...♖d4 (now 18...♗f6 could be met by 19 ♗d2, but 18...c5! looks good) 19 ♗e3 ♗f6 (19...b5!?) 20 b4 ♗h4 21 ♖g1 (Black wins after 21 ♖xd4 exd4 22 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 23 ♗xd4 ♗xh3 24 gxh3 ♗xh3+ 25 ♖g1 ♗g4+ 26 ♖h2 ♗e5) 21...♗f7 22 g3 ♗d8 23 ♖g2 ♗c8 24 ♗xd4 exd4 25 ♗e2 c5 and Black had excellent play in I.Sokolov-V.Spasov, Istanbul 2003.

Returning to 10 a4:



Now White can for the win of a piece or he can play positionally:

d21) 12 g4 is greedy: 12...♖d4 13 gxh5 ♗g4!? (other possibilities are 13...♗h4 and 13...♖f3) 14 f4 ♗h4 15 ♗e4 ♗xh5 16 ♗f2 exf4 with excellent compensation for the piece.

d22) 12 ♖e4 ♖f6 13 ♗g5 ♗e8 14 ♗d2 ♖xe4 15 ♗xe4 ♗d7 16 ♗ae1 ♗f7

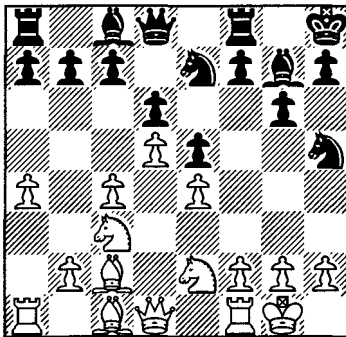
10...f5

This is the obvious move, but White has also prepared for this advance. Other moves are worth considering, especially as Black can always play ...f5 later. Some ideas:

a) 10...c5 looks very sensible, as White will have trouble doing anything on the queenside. This move does

weaken d6, however: 11 f4!? exf4 12 ♖xf4 ♜f6 (Black would prefer to simplify with 12...♜xf4 13 ♙xf4, but then it is hard to get his pieces coordinated: for example, 13...h6 14 ♜b5 or 13...a6 14 ♚d2) 13 ♜d3 ♜g4 14 h3 ♙d4+ 15 ♜h1 ♜e3 (White also keeps the initiative after 15...♜e5 16 ♜xe5 ♙xe5 17 ♙h6 ♜e8 18 ♚f3) 16 ♙xe3 ♙xe3 17 ♚f3 ♙h6 18 ♚g3 f5 19 e5 dxe5 (worth considering was 19...f4!? 20 ♜xf4 dxe5 21 ♜e6 ♙xe6 22 dxe6 ♙f4 with unclear play) 20 ♚xe5 favoured White in S.Atalik-V.Milov, Ottawa 2007, because of his central control.

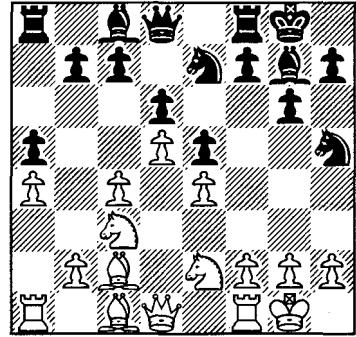
b) 10...♜h8



11 a5 (after 11 ♖a3 Piket suggested 11...a5!?, while 11...f5 12 exf5 gxf5 13 ♜g3 ♜xg3 14 fxg3!? ♜g6 15 ♜e2 ♙d7 16 ♙e3 ♚e7 17 h3 ♚f7 18 a5 gave White the freer play in I.Sokolov-A.David, French League 2003) 11...f5 12 exf5 gxf5 13 ♜g3 ♜f4 14 ♜h5 ♜xh5 15 ♚xh5 a6 16 ♙g5 ♙d7 (White wins material after 16...♚e8 17 ♚xe8 ♜xe8 18 ♙a4 and 16...♙f6 17 ♙xf6+ ♜xf6 18 f4 also leaves him well on top) 17 ♚h4 ♚f7 18 ♙d1!

and Black was in trouble in J.Piket-A.Fedorov, Wijk aan Zee 2001.

c) 10...a5!? is a sensible positional idea, but it does concede the b5-square.



White has:

c1) 11 ♜b5 f5 12 exf5 ♜xf5 (instead 12...gxf5 is well met by 13 ♖a3!, but Black could consider 12...♙xf5!?!; this looks anti-positional, but Black has good piece play after 13 ♙xf5 ♜xf5 14 ♜bc3 ♚h4, while 14 g4 ♜h4 15 gxh5 ♜f3+ with the idea of ...♚h4 gives him a strong attack) 13 ♖a3 ♜h4 14 ♙e4 with a slight edge for White in I.Sokolov-I.Smirin, Bled Olympiad 2002.

c2) 11 ♖a3 and here:

c21) With 11...♜h8 Black prepares a typical regrouping, but there is a problem: 12 ♜b5 ♜g8 13 h3! ♜hf6 (13...♜gf6 would run into 14 g4) 14 ♙g5 h6 15 ♙e3 ♜d7 16 ♚d2 b6 17 b4 and White's queenside play gave him the advantage in J.Horvath-L.Hazai, Hungarian League 2005.

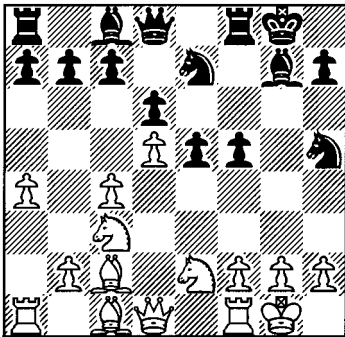
c22) 11...♙g4!? looks funny, but as Hazai points out, Black wants to provoke f2-f3 in order to close the third rank and

the d1-h5 diagonal. Here 12 f3 ♖d7 13 ♘b5 ♘h8 (White has what he wants after 13...f5 14 exf5 gxf5 15 f4) 14 ♘h1 ♘g8 15 ♖e1 ♙c8!? was J.Dorfman-I.Nataf, Marseilles 2001. Black last move prepares ...c6, but 15...b6 and 15...♙h6 were possibilities as well.

c23) 11...f5 12 exf5 ♘xf5! (naturally if 12...gxf5 13 f4) 13 ♘e4 ♘f6 14 ♙g5 ♖e8 15 ♙xf6 (safer is 15 ♘2c3 ♘xe4 16 ♙xe4 ♙f6 17 ♙c1 ♖e7 18 ♘b5 with a tiny edge in E.Bareev-S.Dolmatov, Elista 1997) 15...♙xf6 16 ♖d2 ♙g7 and Black's bishop-pair compensates for White's control of e4. After 17 g3 ♖e7 18 ♘g2 ♙d7 19 h4?! c6 Black had good play and managed to upset one of the main practitioners of White's set-up in I.Sokolov-M.Sollaveld, Dutch League 2003.

11 exf5 gxf5

Here too Black could consider the solid 11...♘xf5!?, although White still kept some advantage after 12 ♘e4 ♘f6 13 ♙g5 ♖e8 14 a5 (or 14 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 15 a5) 14...♘xe4 15 ♙xe4 ♙f6 16 ♙d2 ♖e7 17 ♙c3 ♙g7 18 ♖d3 in G.Lorscheid-J.Gallagher, German League 2003.



12 ♘g3

White immediately puts the question to Black's h5-knight, but there are worthwhile alternatives:

a) 12 f4 is thematic, but Black achieves decent piece play: 12...♘g6 13 fxe5 ♘xe5! 14 ♘f4 ♘xf4 15 ♖xf4 (if 15 ♙xf4 ♘xc4) 15...♘g6 16 ♖f3 ♖h4 17 ♖f1 ♙d7 18 ♙f4 ♖ae8 with good play in Y.Drozdoskij-Z.Efimenko, Poltava 2006.

b) 12 ♙g5 is a typical idea, trying to disrupt Black's coordination:

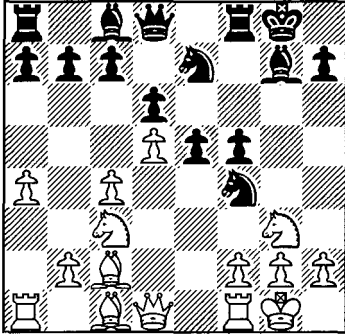
b1) 12...h6 13 ♙h4 ♖e8 (after 13...f4 White can play the simple 14 f3 or even try 14 ♘g3!?) 14 f3 ♘g6 15 ♙f2 ♘gf4 16 ♘h1 was I.Sokolov-D.Stellwagen, Leewardwarden 2004. Here Hazai suggests 16...♖g6 17 ♖g1 c5, although White still has the greater possibilities here.

b2) 12...♖d7!? 13 ♘g3 ♘f4 14 ♘h5 (14 ♙xf4 exf4 15 ♘h5 ♙e5 16 g3 quickly led to trouble for White after 16...♘g6 17 ♖d2 f3!? 18 ♘h1? f4 in L.Bruzon-D.Martinez Martin, Alcala de Henares 2006) 14...♘xh5 15 ♖xh5 ♘g6 16 ♙e3 ♖e7 17 ♖ae1 ♙d7 and Black had no problems in S.Martinovic-M.Bosicic, Velika Gorica 2006.

12...♘f4

This is sharper than 12...♘g3 which is playable as well: 13 hxg3 (or 13 ffg3 ♖e8 14 ♘b5 ♖d7 15 ♙e3 a6 16 ♘c3 ♖e8 with unclear play in R.Palliser-J.Nunn, British League 2001) 13...♘g6 14 ♖h5 ♖f6 (Black could consider 14...e4 with the idea of ...♘e5) 15 ♙g5 ♖f7 16 f3 ♙d7 17 ♖ae1 a6 18 g4!? was A.Shishkov-O.Sepp, Rakvere 2009. Here

Black should try 18...♠f4, although 19 ♖xf7+ ♜xf7 20 ♙xf5 ♙xf5 21 gx5 ♜xf5 22 ♗e4 still favours White.



13 ♖a3

This rook lift can be useful for both attack and defence. Other possibilities:

a) 13 ♙xf4 should only be played if White has something concrete in mind. Here 13...exf4 14 ♗h5 ♙e5 gives Black sufficient play.

b) 13 ♗ce2 ♗eg6 14 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 15 ♗h5 ♗xh5 16 ♖xh5 ♙d7 17 ♖a3 ♖e8 18 ♖e2 a5 19 ♙d2 b6 20 ♜fa1 ♗h8 21 b4 was drawn in B.Lalic-E.Vorobiov, Cappelle la Grande 2010. Black has sufficient play after 21...axb4 22 ♙xb4 e4.

c) 13 ♗h5 ♗xh5 14 ♖xh5 ♗g6 15 f4 (or 15 ♖a3 e4 with unclear play) is thematic and now:

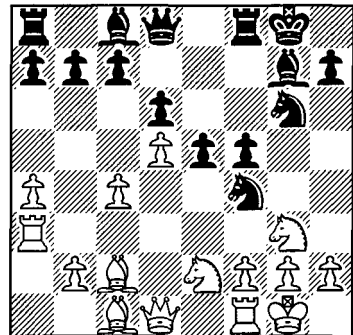
c1) 15...exf4 16 ♗e2!? (16 ♙xf4 ♖f6 17 ♖ad1 ♗xf4 18 ♜xf4 ♖h6 led to a draw in V.Korchnoi-T.Radjabov, Buenos Aires 2001) 16...♙d7 17 ♖a3! ♙e5 18 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 19 ♙xf4 ♖f6 20 ♙xe5 ♖xe5 21 ♜h3 ♜f7 22 ♖g3+ ♖g7 23 ♙xg7+ ♗xg7 24 ♙xf5 ♙xf5 25 ♖xf5 ♖xb2 26 h3 and with Black's king exposed, White

had all the chances in B.Chatalbashev-D.Isonzo, Cutro 2002.

c2) 15...e4 16 ♙e3 c5! 17 g4?! ♖h4 (17...♖b6!?) 18 ♖xh4 ♗xh4 19 ♗b5 ♗f3+ 20 ♗g2? (White has some compensation for the exchange after 20 ♜xf3 exf3 21 g5) 20...♗d4 21 ♙xd4 exd4 22 ♗xd6 e3 was good for Black in K.McPhillips-M.Hebden, Hastings 2008/09.

13...♗eg6 14 ♗ce2

Instead 14 ♗h1 ♖h4 15 ♜g1?! e4 16 f3 ♙d7 17 ♗f1?! ♗d3 18 ♙xd3 exd3 19 ♖xd3? (better is 19 f4, but Black is still doing well after 19...♖g4!) 19...♗e5 20 ♖d1 ♗xc4 gave Black a clear advantage in I.Sokolov-M.Golubev, German League. White could also play 14 ♗h5 ♗xh5 15 ♖xh5 e4, reaching note 'c2' to his 13th move, above.



14...♖g5

A couple of alternatives:

a) 14...c5 15 ♗xf4 exf4 (after 15...♗xf4 16 ♗h5 ♗xh5 17 ♖xh5 White is better placed to play on the kingside) 16 ♗h5 ♙e5 17 ♜f3 ♖h4 was J.Pinter-I.Nataf, Batumi 1999. Now 18 ♗xf4

♙xf4 (worse is 18...♗xf4 19 ♙xf4 ♙xf4 20 g3) 19 g3 ♙xg3 20 fxg3 ♜xc4 21 ♙h6 with the idea of ♙xf5 gives White some initiative as Black's kingside is rather loose.

b) 14...♜h4 looks fine and may even be Black's best: 15 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 16 ♙xf4 exf4 17 ♗h5 ♙e5 18 ♜h3 ♜g5 was okay for Black in V.Georgiev-M.Paragua, Turin 2000, and here 18...♜g4!? is possible as well.

15 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 16 ♜f3 ♙d7 17 ♗h1

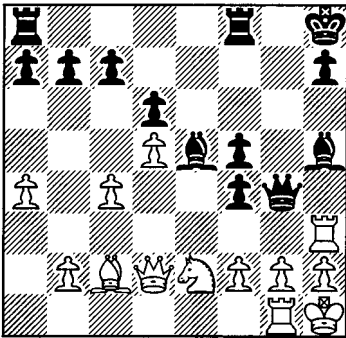
More testing is 17 ♙xf4 exf4 18 ♗e2 ♙e5 19 ♜d2!.

17...♙e8!?

Black finds an unusual route for his bishop.

18 ♜g1 ♗h8 19 ♙xf4 exf4 20 ♜d2 ♙e5 21 ♗e2 ♙h5 22 ♜b3 ♜h4 23 ♜h3 ♜g4

Also possible was 23...♜xf2!? 24 ♜xh5 f3! with complications.



24 ♗d4

It looks risky to allow 24 f3 ♜xh3!, but it only leads to a draw after 25 gxh3 ♙xf3+ 26 ♜g2 ♜g8 27 ♗xf4 ♜xg2 28 ♗xg2 ♜g8 29 ♗g1 (or 29 b3 f4 30 ♗g1) 29...♜xg2+ 30 ♜xg2 ♙xg2 31 ♗xg2

♙xb2 32 ♙xf5.

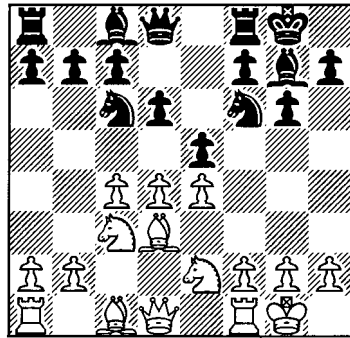
24...f3! 25 ♜g3??

White blunders. Also losing is 25 ♗xf3 ♜xh3!, but 25 ♜d3 ♜xd4 26 ♜xd4 ♙xd4 27 ♜xh5 would hold White's position together.

25...♜xd4

0-1 N.Borne-E.Relange, French League 2007.

C) 7...e5



This is the classical approach. Black immediately initiates play in the centre.

8 d5 ♗d4

Here 8...♗e7 is certainly possible, but it has scored rather poorly. White is very flexible and can play 9 ♗g3 ♗d7 10 ♙e3, which was mentioned in the notes to Black's 9th move in Line A, or he can make a useful move like 9 f3 or 9 ♜b1.

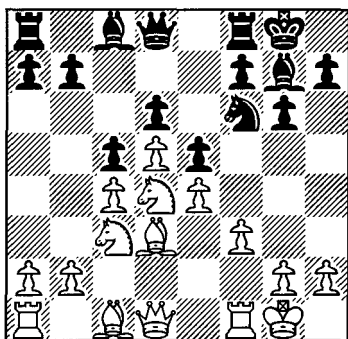
9 ♗d4

This is the most common and direct move, but White has also explored some flexible alternatives:

a) 9 ♙c2 ♗xc2 10 ♜xc2 ♗h5 11 ♙e3 f5 is note 'c' to Black's 9th move in Line B1.

b) 9 ♖b5 c5!? (Black could also play 9...♗xb5 10 cxb5 ♖h5 or 9...♗xe2+ 10 ♗xe2 ♖h5 11 g3 a6 12 ♖c3 ♗e8 with the idea of ...f5) 10 dxc6 (10 ♖bxd4 exd4 11 f3 is variation 'c1' below) 10...♗xc6! 11 ♖c2 ♖g4! 12 f3 ♖e6 13 b3 a6 gives Black good play after 14 ♖bc3 (not 14 ♖xd6? ♗b6+ 15 ♖h1 ♗fd8 16 ♖a3 ♖b4) 14...b5!.

c) 9 f3 is sturdy, but seems inaccurate to me, as usually Black will spend a tempo on ...♗e8 (which is admittedly a useful move) to force this move. After 9...c5 10 ♖xd4 Black has:

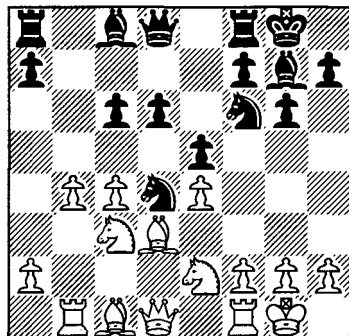


c1) 10...cxd4 11 ♖a4! ♖d7 12 b4 a5 13 b5 b6 (better is 13...♗c7 with the idea 14 b6?! ♖xa4!) 14 f4 ♖g4 (White is also better after 14...exf4 15 ♖xf4 ♗c7 16 h3) 15 f5 gxf5 16 exf5 ♗h4? (16...♖df6) 17 h3 ♖e3 18 ♖xe3 dxe3 19 ♗g4! ♗xg4 20 hxg4 e4 21 ♖e2! ♖xa1 22 ♗xa1 and White was much better, despite the exchange deficit in Y.Seirawan-Z.Kozul, Wijk aan Zee 1991. Black's rooks have no scope and he will remain tied to the defence of the b6-pawn.

c2) More often than not, 10...exd4 is

the better way to recapture. After 11 ♖e2 ♖d7 (Black could also play 11...♗e8 transposing to Line C2, below) 12 f4 b5!? (we will see this typical idea again; 12...♖f6 13 h3 b5 was another example seen in K.Miton-H.Nakamura, New York (rapid) 2004) 13 b3 (13 cxb5 a6 is the idea) 13...♗e8 14 ♖g3 bxc4 15 bxc4 ♗b8 Black had good play in I.Kourkounakis-V.Kotronias, Chania 1999.

d) 9 ♗b1 looks quiet, but play can quickly become tense after 9...c5 10 dxc6 bxc6 11 b4.



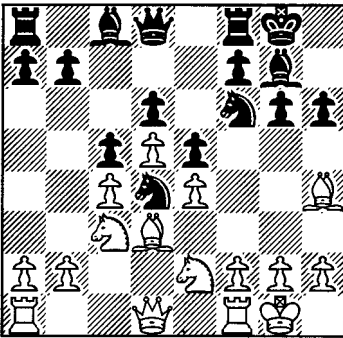
This structure invariably leads to a tough strategic battle. Some examples:

d1) 11...d5 seems too direct and 12 cxd5 cxd5 13 ♖g5 gives White pressure: for example, 13...dxe4 (safer is 13...♖b7 14 ♖xd4 exd4 15 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 16 exd5 ♗xd5 17 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 when Black is close to equality) 14 ♖xe4 ♖b7 15 ♖xd4 exd4 16 ♖c1 ♗b6 (Sokolov suggested 16...♗b8 17 a3 ♖xe4 18 ♖xe4 h6 19 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 20 ♖c6 ♗e5 21 ♗f3 ♖bc8, but White is still a little better after 22 ♖d3) 17 ♖c5 with an edge for White in I.Sokolov-B.Socko, Gothenburg 2005.

d2) 11...♙e6 12 ♖g5 (instead 12 ♗xd4 exd4 13 ♗e2 c5 14 b5 ♜e8 15 ♖g5 h6 16 ♙h4 was A.Aleksandrov-B.Socko, Warsaw 2004, and now 16...g5 17 ♖g3 ♗g4 looks fine for Black) 12...h6 13 ♙h4 ♜d7 14 a4 ♞ab8 15 ♗xd4 exd4 16 ♗e2 ♗g4 (better is 16...g5 17 ♖g3 c5 18 b5 ♗g4) 17 b5 c5 18 ♗f4 ♗e5 19 ♗xe6 fxe6 20 f4 ♗xd3 21 ♜xd3 and White's queenside pawns gave him lasting pressure in V.Georgiev-Y.Dembo, Solin 2007.

d3) 11...♞e8!? is flexible: 12 f3 (Black was fine after 12 b5 ♙b7 13 ♖g5 ♗e6 14 ♙h4 g5 15 bxc6 ♙xc6 16 ♖g3 ♗f4 in D.Berczes-V.Kotronias, Stockholm 2007) 12...♗d7 13 ♗h1 (White's play looks too slow) 13...♗b6 14 b5 ♙e6 15 bxc6 ♗xc6 16 ♗d5 ♗a5! 17 ♞b4 ♞c8 and Black had some initiative in S.Williams-V.Kotronias, Kusadasi 2006.

e) 9 ♖g5 is popular, but the pin is only a minor nuisance after 9...h6 10 ♙h4 c5 and now:



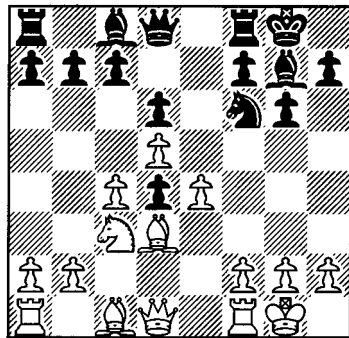
e1) 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 b4 ♞e8!? makes it hard for White to exchange on d4 without slightly weakening himself with f3.

e2) 11 ♗xd4 exd4 12 ♗e2 ♞e8!? 13 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 14 ♜d2 ♖g7 15 b4 b6 16 bxc5 bxc5 17 ♞ab1 ♜d8 18 ♞b3 h5 19 ♗h1 ♗h7 20 ♗g1 ♙h6 21 f4 ♜f6 22 g3 h4 with counterplay, Y. Seirawan-J.Nunn, Cannes 1992.

e3) 11 ♞b1 ♙d7 12 f3 (after 12 b4 Black can play 12...b6 or 12...♗xe2+ 13 ♜xe2 cxb4 14 ♞xb4 ♜c7) 12...g5 13 ♙f2 ♗h5 14 b4 b6 15 bxc5 dxc5 (or 15...bxc5) 16 a4 a5 17 ♙xd4 exd4 (and here 17...cxd4 is an option) 18 ♗b5 ♗f4 with an unclear position in A.Graf-V.Kotronias, Moscow 2004.

e4) 11 f3 a6 (or 11...♙d7 12 ♗xd4 cxd4 13 ♗e2 a5 14 b3 ♜b8 15 ♜d2 ♗h7 with the idea of ...f5, which gave Black counterplay in B.Socko-J.Gallagher, Calvia Olympiad 2004) 12 a4 ♞b8 13 ♗xd4 exd4 14 ♗e2 g5 15 ♖g3 ♗h5 is level. After 16 ♜c2 ♙e5 17 ♙e1 ♙d7 18 ♙d2 b5 19 axb5 axb5 20 b3 ♜b6 21 g4 ♗f6 22 ♞fb1 ♞a8 the game was drawn in S.Atalik-B.Socko, Izmir 2004.

Now we return to the main line, 9 ♗xd4:
9...exd4



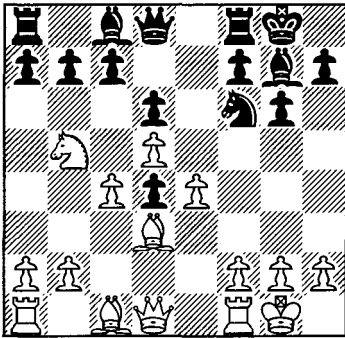
White has a choice of knight moves:

C1: 10 ♖b5

C2: 10 ♖e2

Originally White focused his attention on the more forcing 10 ♖b5, but more recently he has preferred the more strategic 10 ♖e2.

C1) 10 ♖b5



White focuses his attention on the d4-pawn. He will not win it, however, and Black has honed his defences. Moreover, if he can avoid certain strategic pitfalls it is not so difficult to equalize.

10... ♜e8

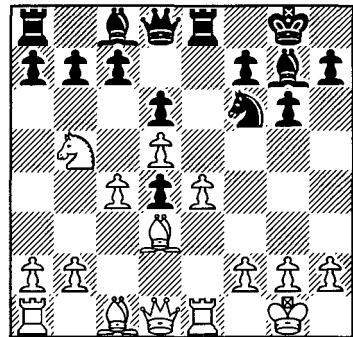
Black counterattacks the e4-pawn. This is the most natural move, but Black has experimented with a couple of other ideas:

a) 10... ♜e7 11 ♜e1 ♖g4 12 h3 ♖xf2? is too optimistic: 13 ♖xf2 a6 14 ♖a3 ♖e5 15 ♜f1! ♜h4+ 16 ♖e2 f5 17 exf5 ♖xf5 18 ♖xf5 ♜xf5 19 ♜xf5 gxf5 20 ♖f1 ♜g3 21 ♜f3 ♜h2 was Y.Seirawan-

B.Gelfand, Wijk aan Zee 1992, when as Seirawan indicates, 22 ♖c2! is the cleanest way to refute Black's play.

b) 10... ♖e8!? protects the d4-pawn and also lends support to c7. This move has had some success, but it looks unnatural to me: 11 ♖c2! (11 b4?! a5 12 bxa5 c6 13 ♖a3 ♜xa5 14 ♜b3 ♖c7 15 ♖d2 ♜a8 16 ♖c2 ♖a6 and Black had an excellent position in E.Bareev-V.Tkachiev, Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2002) 11... ♜f6 12 f4 gave White the better chances in M.Marin-F.Berend, Novi Sad Olympiad 1990. White's knight is a bit misplaced, but Black's queen and e8-knight are awkward as well.

11 ♜e1



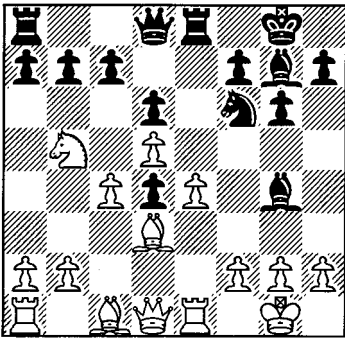
11...a6

This is the most forcing move and the simplest solution to any issues which Black may face. The alternatives are worth looking at, however, even if only to understand the development of the variation:

a) 11... ♖d7 is another way to prompt White to take the d4-pawn. After 12 ♖xd4 (12 ♖g5 h6 13 ♖h4 a6 14 ♖xd4

g5 15 ♖g3 ♜xd5 does not change much) 12...♜xd5 13 cxd5 ♖xd4 14 ♚b3 (instead the slow 14 ♚c2 c6! 15 dxc6 ♖xc6 16 ♖e3 ♖xe3 17 ♜xe3 d5 saw Black beginning to take over the initiative in A.Mastrovasilis-V.Kotronias, Athens 2003) 14...c5!? (or 14...c6 15 ♖e3 ♖xe3 with a draw in K.Urban-S.Atalik, Cappelle la Grande 1996) 15 ♚xb7 c4 16 ♖xc4 ♚b8 17 ♚a6 ♚f6 gives Black serious counterplay: 18 ♖e3 ♜xb2 19 ♖xd4 ♚xd4 20 ♚f1 ♜xe4 21 ♚xd6 ♖e8 (Black could also consider 21...♜xf2 22 ♜xf2 ♚xa1+ 23 ♖f1 ♖e8 or even 21...♖g4!?) 22 ♜ac1 ♚f4 and Black had some initiative in D.Reinderman-F.Nijboer, Brussels 1993.

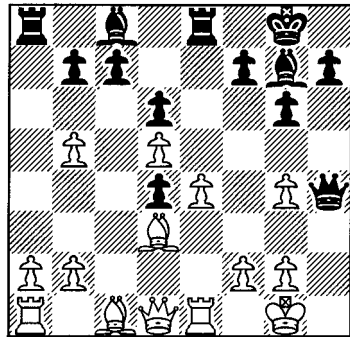
b) 11...♖g4 is provocative:



12 f3 (instead 12 ♚c2 a6 13 ♜xd4 ♜xe4 14 ♜b3? ♜c5 was much better for Black in H.Olafsson-V.Kotronias, Reykjavik 1992, but 14 ♜e6! would be unclear) 12...♖d7 13 ♖g5 (White intends ♖h4-f2; instead 13 ♜xd4 ♜xd5 is fine for Black, while 13 ♖f1 ♖xb5 14 cxb5 ♜d7 15 ♖d2 h5 16 ♜c1 ♜e5 17 ♖f4 h4 18 h3 g5 19 ♖h2 ♜g6 was pretty level in V.Chekhov-

V.Kotronias, Gausdal 1991) 13...♚b8!? 14 ♖f1 c5 15 a4 a6 16 ♜a3 h6 17 ♖d2 was M.Marin-R.Garcia, Andorra 1992. Marin claims that White is much better here. I do not think it is nearly that bad, but I also question that provoking f2-f3 really helps Black.

c) 11...♜g4 used to be the main line. After 12 h3 a6 13 hxg4 axb5 14 cxb5 ♚h4 Black will win back his pawn, but White's strategic ideas have begun to take shape. White may bring pressure to c7, while the pawn majority on the a- and b-files can cause Black problems in any endgame.



Here:

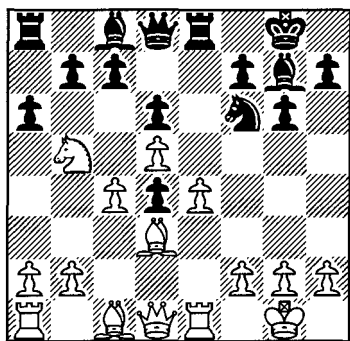
c1) 15 g5? can be quickly dismissed because of 15...♖e5 and 15...♖g4 may be even stronger.

c2) 15 g3 ♚h3 (White has scored well in the endgame arising from 15...♚xg4 16 ♚xg4 ♖xg4 17 ♜g2 f5 18 a4 fxe4 19 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 20 ♖xe4 ♖e2 21 ♜a3, although Nakamura was happy to go in for this in L.Aronian-H.Nakamura, Monte Carlo (rapid) 2011; that saw instead 17 ♖f4?! ♖f3 18 b6 g5! 19 ♖xg5

♖e5 20 ♗h4 cxb6 21 ♖c1 ♖ae8 and Black had good play) 16 ♗f1 (the untried 16 ♗e2! looks problematic; if 16...♖xe4? 17 ♗f1 ♖xe1 18 ♗xe1 ♗xg4 19 ♗e8+ ♗f8 20 ♗h6 and White wins) 16...♗xg4 17 ♗xg4 ♗xg4 18 ♖g2 ♗d7 19 a4 f5 (interesting is 19...b6!? 20 b4? f5 21 f3 d3! 22 ♖a3 ♗xb5 23 axb5 d2 0-1 B.Kouatly-R.Douven, Wijk aan Zee 1988) 20 f3 fxe4 21 fxe4 b6 22 ♗d3 ♗f6 23 b4 and the queenside pawns gave White an advantage in A.Aleksandrov-I.Makarjev, Alma-Ata 1991.

c3) 15 ♗f4! may shut the door on 11...♗g4. After 15...♗xg4 16 ♗d2 ♗e5 17 ♗xe5 (17 a4 gave White an edge in V.Milov-E.Sutovsky, Struga 1995, but the text move looks even stronger) 17...♖xe5 (Black will not solve his problems after 17...dxe5 18 a4 either) 18 ♗f4 ♖xa2 (Black goes for a trick, because 18...♖h5 19 f3 ♗h1+ 20 ♖f2 ♗h4+ 21 ♗g3 is terrible) 19 f3! Black lost a piece in I.Farago-I.Piven, Deizisau 1997.

Returning to 11...a6:



12 ♗xd4

Instead 12 ♗a3 is playable of course,

but Black has a pleasant choice between 12...c5, 12...♗g4 and 12...♗d7.

12...♗xd5

This is the point of Black's play.

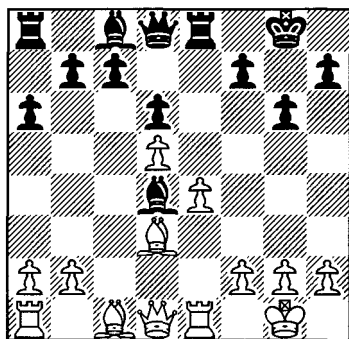
13 cxd5

After other moves Black is already fighting for the initiative:

a) 13 ♗c2 ♗b6 14 ♖b1 (or 14 ♗e3 ♗d7) 14...♗a4! 15 ♗e3 ♗c5 with an active position.

b) 13 ♗f5 ♗xf5 14 exf5 ♗b4 15 ♖xe8+ ♗xe8 16 fxg6 hxg6 17 ♗f1 ♗e4! when Black's centralized pieces and development lead gave him some initiative in I.Foygel-D.Vigorito, Boston 1992.

13...♗xd4



Black has not experience any real difficulties here.

14 ♗c2

Or 14 ♗a4 ♗e5 (instead 14...c5 15 dxc6 ♗b6 16 ♗e3 ♗xe3 17 ♖xe3 bxc6 is dull and with his better pawn structure only White can play for anything here) 15 ♖b1 ♗d7 16 ♗b4 c5! 17 dxc6 (17 ♗xb7 ♗a4! with the idea of ...♖e7 is a typical trick) 17...♗xc6 18 ♗e3 d5! gives Black the initiative. Here 19 ♗b6 ♗f6 20

g3? was B.Damljanovic-Z.Kozul, Pula 1990, when Black could have won immediately here with 20...♗b5!

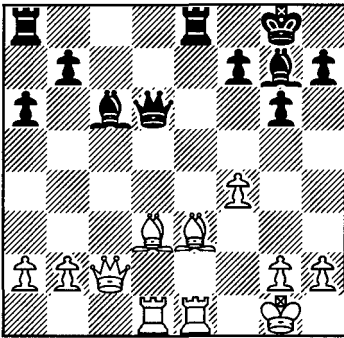
14...♗d7 15 ♖e3 ♖e5!?

This keeps pieces on and tries to provoke White. Instead 15...♗xe3 16 ♖xe3 c5 17 ♗c3 gives White some pressure in the centre. After 17...♗g5 18 ♖f1 ♗e5 19 ♗xe5! dxe5 20 f4 f6 21 fxe5 fxe5 22 ♖f6 White had a definite advantage in M.Marin-G.Timoscenko, Calimanesti 1992. The retreat 15...♗g7 is safe, however: 16 ♖ad1 c5 17 dxc6 was agreed draw in Y.Seirawan-J.Benjamin, Los Angeles 1991.

16 f4

Instead 16 ♖ac1 c5 is fine for Black, while 16 ♗b3 is still met by 16...c5! because 17 ♗xb7? (better is 17 dxc6 ♖xc6 with equality) is again met by 17...♗a4 with the idea of ...♖e7.

16...♗g7 17 ♖ad1 c6 18 dxc6 ♖xc6 19 e5 ♗c7 20 exd6 ♗xd6



21 ♖b5

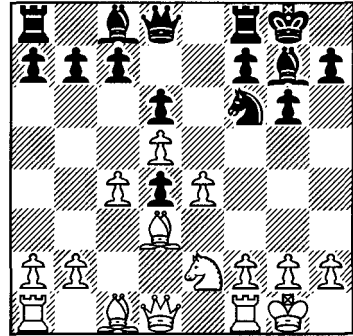
Not 21 ♖xa6? ♗b4! and White has big problems.

21...♗f6 22 ♖xc6 ♖ac8 23 ♖f2 ♖xe1+ 24

♖xe1 bxc6 25 ♗c4 ♗xb2 26 ♗xa6 ♖d8 27 ♗xc6 ♗xa2

Here a draw was agreed in B.Zhak-A.Ponomarev, correspondence 2008.

C2) 10 ♖e2



This is the modern move. White avoids the forcing lines and simplification of Line C1, and aims for a strategic battle.

10...♖e8 11 f3

White has also played 11 ♖g3. Black should continue in similar fashion with 11...c5 12 h3 ♖d7 13 f4 b5!?

11...c5

This is the main line. Black has a healthy alternative in 11...♖d7!? and here:

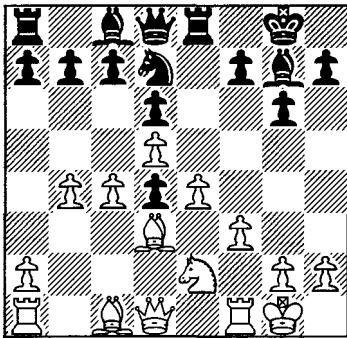
a) 12 ♖c2 ♖e5 13 ♖xd4 ♖xc4 was level in V.Chekhov-U.Kaminski, Kecskemet 1989. This is very similar to 8 ♖c2 in the notes to White's 8th move in Line A.

b) 12 ♖f4 ♗e7 (12...♖c5?! 13 b4 just cost Black time in S.Conquest-S.Atalik, Hastings 1995/96, but 12...♖e5!? is possible) 13 ♗d2 c5 14 ♖ae1 ♖e5 15 b3 a6 16 ♖c1 ♖d7 17 h3 b5 gave Black excel-

lent play on the queenside in S.Zawadzki-M.Szelag, Lublin 2009.

c) 12 ♖b1 c5 13 b4 b6 14 f4 ♟f6 (after 14...cxb4!? 15 ♙c2 Piskov claims that with the idea of ♟d4-c6 White is better, but 15...♚c7! 16 ♟xd4 ♚xc4 17 ♟c6 a5 looks good for Black) 15 ♟g3 h5 (Black could also just play 15...♟g4) 16 bxc5 bxc5 17 e5! dxe5 18 fxe5 ♗xe5 19 ♙f4 ♟g4 (not 19...♗e8? 20 ♙g5) 20 h3 (Black has good compensation after 20 ♙xe5 ♙xe5) 20...♟e3 21 ♚f3! ♟xf1 22 ♗xf1 ♗e8 23 ♟xh5! and White had good attacking chances in Y.Piskov-J.Nunn, Germany 1992.

d) 12 b4 and now:



d1) 12...c5 13 bxc5 ♟xc5 14 ♙b2 ♚g5 15 f4 ♚e7 (15...♚h4 with the idea of ...♟xe4 looks better) 16 ♙xd4 ♟xd3 17 ♚xd3 ♚xe4 18 ♚c3! ♚xe2 19 ♙xg7 ♚e3+ 20 ♚xe3 ♗xe3 21 ♙f6 and White had the initiative in the endgame in S.Skembris-H.Banikas, Athens 1997.

d2) 12...a5 13 b5 ♟c5 14 ♙b2 ♚g5 15 ♙c1 ♚d8 (Black could also play on with 15...♚h4 16 ♙b2 f5!? with good play) 16 ♙b2 ♚g5 17 ♙c1 with a draw by repeti-

tion in S.Skembris-V.Kotronias, Salonica 2006.

12 ♙g5

Instead 12 ♟g3 could be met by 12...♟d7 or even the immediate 12...b5!?

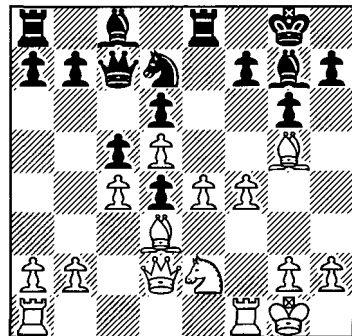
12...♚c7

Black breaks the pin in a simple way. He should probably avoid throwing in 12...h6 13 ♙h4, at least for the moment.

13 ♚d2

Instead 13 ♟g3 ♟d7 14 f4 h6 15 ♙h4 b5!? 16 cxb5 (16 b3 bxc4 17 bxc4 ♖b8 is comfortable for Black) 16...a6 17 b6 (17 bxa6 ♙xa6 gives Black excellent play) 17...♚xb6 18 ♚f3 ♗a7!? (18...♚xb2!?) 19 ♗ae1 ♚xb2?! 20 e5 dxe5 21 ♟e4 gave White attacking chances in L.Yudasin-S.Temirbaev, Kuibyshev 1986, but here 19...a5! 20 ♗f2 ♙a6 is good for Black, as indicated by Yudasin.

13...♟d7 14 f4



14...b5!?

This gives Black good play on the queenside. An alternative is to head for the e3-square with 14...♟f6. If 15 ♟g3 ♟g4 gives Black good play, so White

could consider 15 f5!? ♗xe4 16 ♙xe4 ♜xe4 17 ♖g3 with the idea of f5-f6.

15 b3

If 15 cxb5 a6 gives Black good counterplay on the queenside. The c5- and d4-pawns could become mobile, and the white e-pawn will require attention.

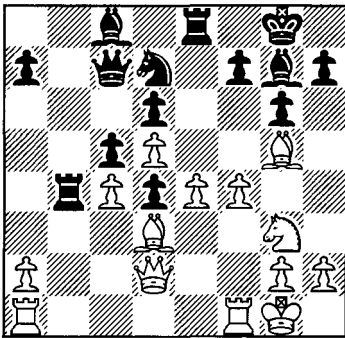
15...bxc4 16 bxc4 ♜b8

This is natural enough, but again Black can play 16...♗f6. After 17 ♙xf6 (if 17 ♗g3 ♗g4) 17...♙xf6 18 ♗g3 and:

a) 18...♙g7 19 ♜ae1 ♜b8 20 e5 dxe5 21 f5 ♜b6 (21...♜e7!?) 22 ♜e2 ♜f6 (again 22...♜e7 is possible) 23 ♜g5 ♜e7 (now it is a bit late, as we shall see, so Black should have considered 23...♜d8!? 24 ♜ef2 ♙d7 with the idea 25 fxc6? ♜xf2) 24 ♜ef2 h6?! was P.Genov-M.Van Delft, Hoogeveen 2009. By now White has built up real attacking possibilities which could have been exploited with 25 ♜xf6!?.

b) After 18...♜b8!? White's pawn break does not seem to work: 19 e5 dxe5 20 f5 ♜e7 21 ♗e4 (or 21 d6 ♙g5!) 21...♙xf5 22 ♗xf6+ ♜xf6 23 g4 e4!

17 ♗g3 ♜b4



Black is ready to pile the pressure on the c4-pawn with ...♙a6 and ...♗b6, so White must create some play.

18 e5 dxe5 19 f5

This is a typical breakthrough in Benoni structures, but Black has more than adequate resources.

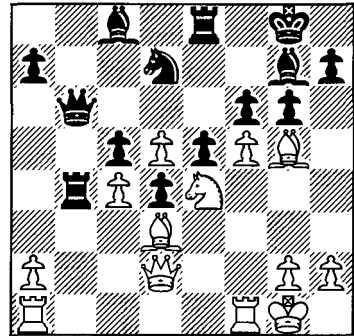
19...♜b6!

Not 19...f6? 20 fxc6 fxc6 21 gxh7+ ♗h8 22 ♜f7 with dangerous attacking chances.

20 ♗e4

Wells has suggested 20 ♜f2!?. If 20...f6 21 fxc6 and 20...♗f6 21 fxc6 fxc6 22 ♜af1 ♗g4 23 ♜f7 also gives White attacking chances. Black may be better off pursuing his own campaign with 20...♙a6!?.

20...f6



21 ♙h6

Instead 21 fxc6 hxc6! with the idea of ...f5 is good for Black. White has also tried 21 d6. This move cuts off the black queen and looks dangerous, but it is easier to defend more than 20 years after the stem game was played. Following 21...♜b2 22 ♜c1 Black has:

a) 22...gxf5 23 ♖xf5 fxc5 24 ♜xg5 looks dangerous, but 24...♗e6! defends.

b) 22...fxg5 23 fxc6 h6 (or 23...hxg6) 24 ♖f7 ♘f8? 25 ♜f1 with the idea of ♖xg7 gives White a decisive attack as pointed out by Yermolinsky, but Black could have defended with 24...♖f8! 25 ♜f1 ♘h8.

c) 23...♗b7 23 fxc6 hxg6 24 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 (or, alternatively, 24...♗xe4! 25 ♗xe4 ♘xf6 26 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 27 ♜h6 transposing to variation 'c2') 25 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 26 ♜h6 and now:

c1) 26...♖f8? 27 ♜xg6+ ♗g7 28 ♜e6+ ♘h8 29 ♜h3+ ♗g8 30 ♜e6+ was drawn in A.Nenashev-A.Yermolinsky, Pavlodar 1987.

c2) 26...♗xe4! 27 ♗xe4 ♜xd6 28 ♗d5+ ♖e6 29 ♖f1 ♘f7 30 g4 with the idea of g5 was given as decisive by Yermolinsky, but after 30...♘e7! 31 g5 ♗xg5 32 ♜g7+ (or 32 ♜xg5+ ♖f6) 32...♘d8 33 ♗xe6 ♗f4! Black defends himself when actually his two pawn advantage is decisive.

21...♖b2 22 ♜c1 ♖e7

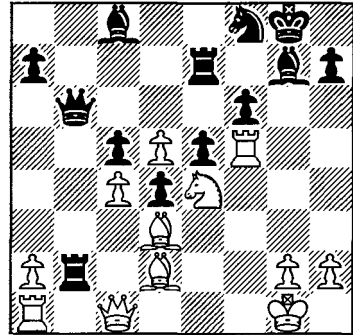
Wells gives an interesting line: 22...g5 23 ♗xg7 ♘xg7 24 ♘g5 fxc5 25 f6+ ♘f7 26 ♗xh7 (not 26 ♜xg5? ♖xg2+) 26...♖h8 27 ♗e4 ♖g8 28 ♗h7 with an odd repetition.

23 ♗d2 gxf5

Black could also try 23...♘f8!? 24 ♗a5 (or 24 d6 ♖b7 24 fxc6 hxg6 with the idea of ...f5) 24...♜xa5 25 ♜xb2 ♗xf5 when White's attack is over and Black

has good play for the exchange.

24 ♖xf5 ♘f8



25 d6?!

Also bad are 25 ♘g3 e4! and 25 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 26 ♖xf6 ♜xf6 27 ♜xb2 e4, so Wells suggests 25 ♜f1 ♗xf5 26 ♜xf5 ♜d8 27 ♗c1! ♖b8 28 ♗a3 when White has good compensation for the exchange.

25...♖f7 26 ♖f2

After 26 ♘g3 ♖b7 Black intends ...♜xd6 and 27 ♗e4 ♜xd6 28 ♗xb7 ♖xb7 is good for him.

26...f5 27 ♘g5 ♖f6

Or 27...♖b7!? 28 ♗a5 (instead 28 ♗xf5 ♗xf5 29 ♖xf5 ♜xd6 fares no better) 28...♜xa5 29 ♖xb2 ♖xb2 30 ♜xb2 ♜d8! 31 ♖b8 ♗f6 32 ♘h3?! e4 which is good for Black, although 32 ♘e4!? fxe4 33 ♗xe4 is not so clear.

28 ♗a5 ♜xa5 29 ♜xb2

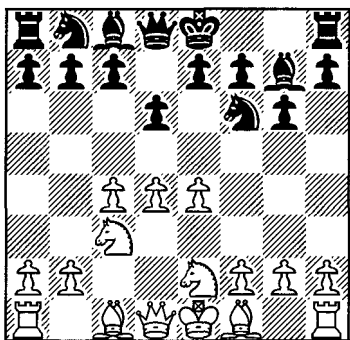
This was B.Chatalbashev-G.Timoshenko, Vienna 2008. Now 29...h6! (but not 29...e4 30 ♗xe4!) 30 ♖b8 (or 30 ♘h3 e4) 30...♜a6! would give Black a big plus.

Chapter 13

Hungarian Variation

5 ♖ge2

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♖ge2



This flexible move was developed by the Hungarian Grandmasters Szabo and Forintos. Today its most notable exponents are Tregubov, Novikov and Serper. The Hungarian Variation is a bit of a nuisance regarding our repertoire choices, as White may be sneaky and look to transpose to a Sämisch with a quick f2-f3.

5...0-0

One respectable line is 5...♘bd7 6

♘g3 e5 7 d5 h5, but if White plays 6 f3 we are stuck in a Sämisch with ...♘bd7. The immediate 5...e5 could also be met by 6 f3. Likewise, one popular plan is to play a quick ...c6, ...a6 and ...b5, but if 5...c6 Black again has to worry about 6 f3. However, Black could play 5...a6 with the idea of 6 f3 0-0 and 7...♘c6! heading into the Sämisch Panno. Moreover, after 5...a6 6 ♘g3 Black can play 6...c6, but I ultimately decided against this set-up, as I did not feel it blended in well with the rest of the repertoire. Castling is the most natural and flexible.

6 ♘g3

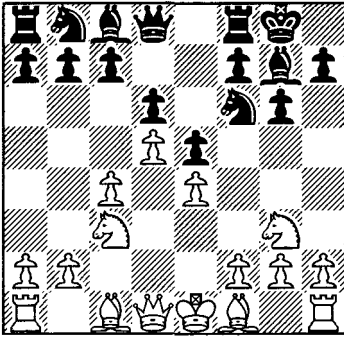
If 6 f3 ♘c6 we are in the Sämisch Panno covered in Volume I.

6...e5

Black sticks with a classical approach. Instead 6...c5 is quite valid, but after 7 d5 e6 8 ♗e2 exd5 9 cxd5 (9 exd5 is actually more common, but I have no complaints after 9...♘bd7 with the idea of ...♗e8 and ...♗e5) 9...a6 10 a4 ♘bd7

11 f3!? (or 11 O-O ♖e8 12 f3) we are in rather theoretical waters of the Sämisch Benoni.

7 d5

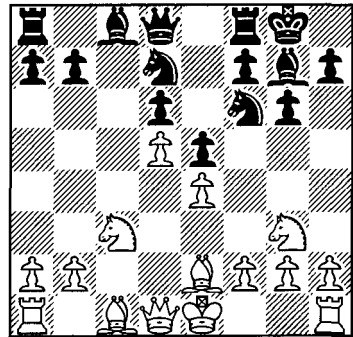


The position resembles a Petrosian Variation, but here White's knight has gone to g3. At first this just seems like a silly square, as the knight is hindered by Black's g6-pawn. However, the knight serves some purpose. White may use it to continue offensively with h4-h5. If Black plays ...h5 himself, then it can be difficult to play ...f5, because after exf5 and ...gxf5, the h5-pawn is loose. Black also must watch for a piece sacrifice involving ♗e2xh5, especially if White has played ♗c1-g5 to pin the f6-knight. It is this possibility that has caused some black players to delay or even avoid castling, but I do not think this vague threat is so scary yet.

7...a5

Continuing to play in a standard manner. Black restrains White's queenside and secures the c5-square for a knight. Black has also tried some exotic moves like 7...h5 and 7...♟g4, but the

main alternative is to play the immediate 7...c6. Black opens the c-file to ensure he has a source for counterplay if White decides to focus on the kingside. After 8 ♗e2 cxd5 9 cxd5 ♟bd7 White has two different ways to play. He can advance his h-pawn or he can castle kingside:



a) 10 h4 h5 (Black could also play 10...a5 11 h5 ♟c5 which transposes to Line A) 11 ♗g5 a6 (instead 11...♜b6 12 ♜b1 a5 13 a3 looks a little better for White, while even 12 O-O!? makes some sense, as 12...♜xb2?! can be met by 13 ♟b5) 12 a4 (there is also the rather speculative 12 ♗xh5!? gxh5 13 ♟xh5 ♜a5 14 ♟xg7 ♟xg7 15 ♜d2 ♟g8) 12...♜b6 (or 12...♗e8 13 a5) 13 a5! ♜xb2 14 ♗d2 ♗h6 (after 14...♟c5 15 ♜a2! ♜b3 16 ♜a1 the black queen is in trouble) 15 ♗xh6 ♜xc3+ 16 ♗d2 with good compensation for the pawn.

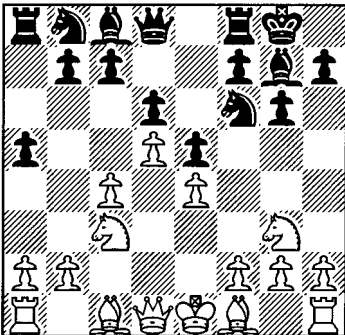
b) 10 O-O a6 11 ♗e3 resembles a line from the Sämisch (5 f3 O-O 6 ♗e3 e5 7 d5 c6 8 ♗d3 cxd5 9 cxd5 ♟bd7 10 ♟ge2 a6 11 O-O). After 11...h5 (Black tries to take advantage of White's knight on g3,

as 11...b5 is well met by 12 b4! ♘b6 13 a4) White has:

b1) 12 ♖e1 ♘h7 13 ♘f1 ♙f6 with the idea of ...♙f6-g5 was V.Chekhov-Ye Ji-angchuan, Beijing 1991. This is a typical idea for Black.

b2) 12 ♖c1 ♘h7 (Black can also play 12...h4 13 ♘h1 b5!?) because with the rook on c1, the b4 and a4 plan is not dangerous anymore, and after 14 f3 ♘h5 Black has good play) 13 ♗d2 h4 (13...♙f6!?) 14 ♘h1 f5 15 exf5 gxf5 16 f4 is a typical position that favours White, as the h1-knight will emerge on f2 and Black's position looks a bit loose.

b3) 12 ♙g5 ♗e8 13 ♗d2 ♘h7 14 ♙e3 (Black does not fear the exchange of bishops after 14 ♙h6 h4 15 ♘h1 ♗e7) 14...h4 (Black could also consider 14...♗d8 with the idea of ...♙f6-g5) 15 ♘h1 and now 15...f5 16 exf5 gxf5 17 f4 gives White some advantage, so Bologan suggests 15...♘df6!?. White will have to play f2-f3 at some point to get the h1-knight back into play, but doing so will allow Black to play ...♘f6-h5.



8 ♙e2

The immediate 8 h4 is also possible, but play will generally transpose to Lines A or B depending on how Black reacts:

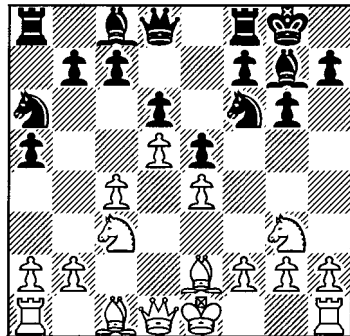
a) 8...h5 9 ♙g5 ♘a6 10 ♙e2 is Line B.

b) 8...♘a6 9 h5 and now:

b1) 9...c6 10 ♙g5 and now Black must avoid 10...cxd5? 11 h6 ♙h8 12 ♗f3! when the pin caused Black significant problems in G.Serper-H.Watzka, Eupen 1994. Instead 10...♘c5 transposes to variation 'b2' and 10 ♙e2 is Line A.

b2) 9...♘c5 10 ♙g5 (10 ♙e2 c6 is Line A again) 10...c6 and now if White gets too creative with 11 h6 ♙h8 12 ♗f3?! (12 ♙e2), Black has 12...♙g4! 13 ♗xg4 (13 ♙xf6 ♗c8! 14 ♗e3 ♙xf6 also favours Black) 13...♘xg4 14 ♙xd8 ♖fxd8 and with the bishop-pair Black stood well in P.Tregubov-A.Volokitin, German League 2007.

8...♘a6



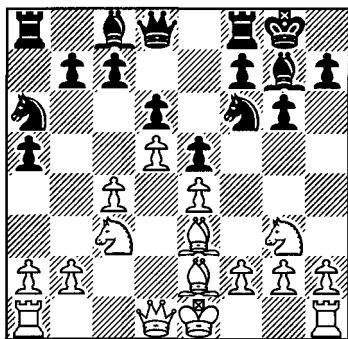
9 h4

The advance of the h-pawn gives the play a distinct character and the position is strategically complex. Black's set-up is similar to those found in some

lines of the Petrosian and Makogonov variations, but here White's h-pawn moves up two squares. White may get attacking chances, but more often this advance limits Black's play on the kingside, and in fact it is not unusual at all for White to still castle kingside. Black is not without chances, however, as the advance of the h-pawn leaves weaknesses in White's position – the pawn itself may become a target on h4 and castling kingside will not always be appetizing for White. White's focus on the kingside also means that Black can seek chances on the other side of the board, especially with the g3-knight far away from the queenside action.

White has other logical moves, but they are less dangerous:

a) 9 ♙e3

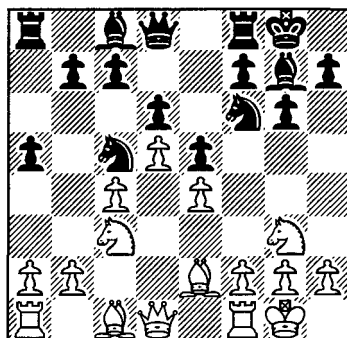


9...♠c5 (9...h5 would transpose to variation 'b') 10 ♜b1 ♙d7 11 b3 h5! 12 ♙g5 (instead 12 f3 allows 12...h4 13 ♠f1 ♠h5) 12...♞e8 13 h4 ♠h7 14 ♙e3 ♞e7 (with the idea of ...♙f6) 15 ♠f1 f5 16 exf5 ♙xf5 17 ♜c1 ♙f6 and Black already had seized the initiative in I.Bern-

V.Bologan, Stavanger 1991.

b) 9 ♙g5 is a typical provocation: 9...h6 10 ♙e3 h5 (or 10...♠h7 11 ♞d2 h5 12 0-0-0 ♙d7 with complicated play in R.Ponomariov-R.Kasimdzhanov, Tomsk 2006) 11 ♙g5 (instead 11 ♞d2 ♠g4 12 ♙xg4 ♙xg4 13 f3 ♙d7 14 0-0-0 ♞e7 15 ♠b1 ♜fb8!?) was I.Novikov-V.Loginov, Tashkent 1986, and here 12...hxg4!?) was also possible) 11...♞e8 12 ♞d2 ♠h7 13 ♙h6 (Black does not object to the exchange of bishops; instead 13 ♙e3 is similar to Ponomariov-Kasimdzhanov, but here Black has played ...♞e8 'for free', although it is not clear the queen is better there than it was on d8) 13...h4 14 ♙xg7 ♠xg7 15 ♠f1 ♠c5 and Black had no problems in M.Rohde-J.Polgar, New York 1992.

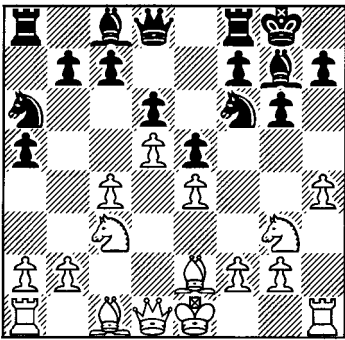
c) 9 0-0 is not so dangerous after 9...♠c5 (the overambitious 9...h5 10 ♙g5 ♞e8 11 ♞d2 ♠h7 12 ♙e3 h4 13 ♠h1 f5 14 exf5 gxf5 15 f4 favours White) and now:



c1) 10 b3 ♙d7 11 ♜b1 h5 12 ♙g5 ♞e8 13 ♞d2 ♠h7 14 ♙h6 (this wastes time, so White should make Black play

14 $\text{e}3$ h4 15 $\text{d}h1$ $\text{w}e7$ 16 f3 $\text{e}f6$ intending ... $\text{e}g5$) 14...h4 15 $\text{e}xg7$ $\text{c}xg7$ 16 $\text{d}h1$ $\text{w}e7$ with a comfortable position for Black in G.Giorgadze-V.Akopian, Tbilisi 1989.

c2) 10 $\text{e}3$ h5 (Black could also play 10... $\text{e}d7$ intending ...h5 next) 11 $\text{e}g5$ $\text{w}d7$? (now 11... $\text{e}d7$ is met by 12 $\text{e}xh5$!, while 11... $\text{w}e8$ 12 $\text{d}b5$ is annoying) 12 $\text{w}d2$ $\text{d}h7$ 13 $\text{e}h6$ (better is 13 $\text{e}3$ h4 14 $\text{d}h1$ $\text{w}e7$ 15 f3 as here White has not spent time on b3 and $\text{c}b1$) 13...h4 14 $\text{e}xg7$ $\text{c}xg7$ 15 $\text{d}h1$ $\text{w}e7$ with a similar and pleasant position for Black in E.Ghaem Maghami-Z.Kozul, Dresden Olympiad 2008.



After 9 h4 Black has to make a fundamental choice. He can look to immediately create counterplay on the queenside or he can halt the advance of White's h-pawn. We have:

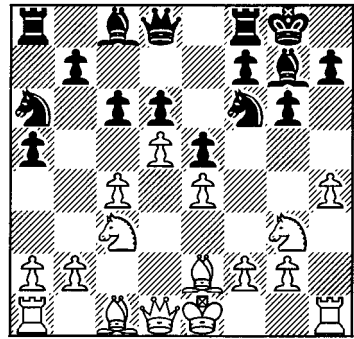
A: 9...c6

B: 9...h5

Instead 9... $\text{d}c5$ gives White extra choice: 10 h5 c6 11 $\text{e}g5$ (11 $\text{e}3$ $\text{c}xd5$ 12

$\text{c}xd5$ is Line A) 11... $\text{c}xd5$ and here Forintos and Haag suggest 12 $\text{h}xg6$! with the idea of 12... $\text{f}xg6$ 13 $\text{e}xd5$ when White can use the e4-square, or 12... $\text{h}xg6$ 13 $\text{c}xd5$ intending $\text{w}d2$ and $\text{e}h6$ when White has attacking chances.

A) 9...c6



10 h5

Instead 10 $\text{e}g5$ is uncommon. The simplest answer is 10...h6! (Bologan considers 10... $\text{d}c5$ 11 h5 $\text{c}xd5$ 12 $\text{e}xd5$! $\text{w}b6$ 13 $\text{c}b1$ $\text{e}d7$ 14 $\text{w}d2$ to be better for White) 11 $\text{e}3$ $\text{c}xd5$ 12 $\text{c}xd5$ h5 13 f3 $\text{e}d7$ 14 $\text{e}b5$. Normally this would be an achievement for White, but with the kingside pawn structure fixed, matters are less clear. Black does not mind trading light-squared bishops, because he has less space and White's king lacks an ideal home. After 14... $\text{c}c8$ 15 $\text{d}g\text{e}2$ $\text{d}b4$!? 16 $\text{e}xd7$ (if 16 a3 $\text{d}c2$ + 17 $\text{w}xc2$ $\text{e}xb5$) 16... $\text{d}xd7$ 17 a3 $\text{d}a6$ chances were level in N.Farrell-K.Arakhamia Grant, Cappelle la Grande 1993.

10...cxd5

Black could play 10... $\text{d}c5$ first, but I

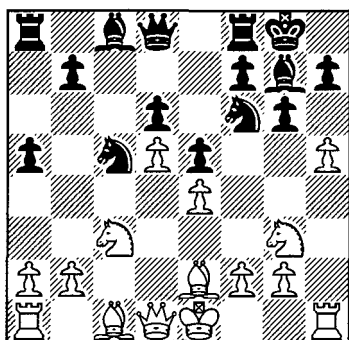
think it is best to determine the pawn structure immediately.

11 cxd5

After 11 exd5 ♖d7 Black immediately plans to use his pawn majority and 12 hxg6 hxg6 13 ♙h6 f5 14 ♛d2 f4 15 ♗ge4 ♝dc5 was unclear in S.Siebrecht-M.Prusikin, Saarbruecken 2009. Instead 11 h6 ♙h8 12 cxd5 ♜c5 transposes to note 'b' to White's 12 move, below, although here 12...♜d7 13 ♙e3 ♝dc5 14 ♛d2 ♙d7 is an interesting alternative.

11...♜c5

Black could also try the immediate 11...♙d7.



12 ♙e3

There are a couple of alternatives:

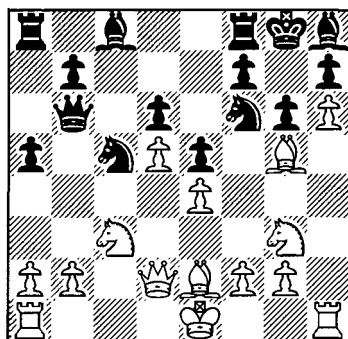
a) 12 ♙g5 and now:

a1) 12...♙d7 13 ♛d2 (13 h6!?) 13...♜b8! 14 f3 b5 with a complicated strategical struggle in I.Novikov-A.Sidelnikov, New York 1991.

a2) 12...♛b6 13 ♛d2 ♙d7 14 ♜b1 a4 15 ♙h6?! ♛b4 16 ♜h4 (instead 16 ♙xg7 ♗xg7 is fine for Black, while 16 f3 ♙xh6 17 ♛xh6 a3 gives Black good play) 16...♙xh6 17 ♛xh6 a3 18 ♛d2 axb2

(18...♜a4 may be even stronger) 19 ♜xb2 ♛d4 with a good position for Black in A.Belozerov-I.Zakharevich, St Petersburg 1997.

b) 12 h6! is an interesting idea frequently played by the Hungarian IM Jakab. After 12...♙h8 13 ♙g5 ♛b6 14 ♛d2 Black has:



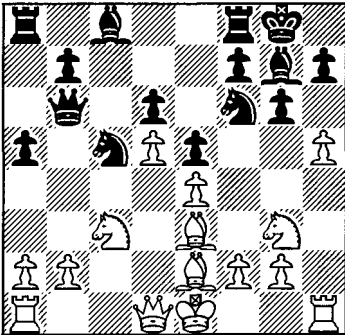
b1) 14...♙d7 15 0-0! (White intends ♗h1 and f4 with a kingside initiative) 15...♜fc8 (15...♜g4!?) 16 ♗h1 ♛b4 17 f3 and now rather than 17...♜e8 18 f4! f6 19 f5! with good attacking chances in A.Jakab-N.Resika, Budapest 2001, Black could try 17...♛d4!?

b2) 14...♜g4! is a principled reply. After 15 f3 f6 16 ♙h4 ♜f2! 17 ♜f1 Black's knight looks trapped, but 17...♛xb2! 18 ♛xb2 (if 18 ♜b1 ♛xd2+ 19 ♗xd2 g5) 18...♜fd3+ 19 ♙xd3 ♜xd3+ 20 ♗e2 ♜xb2 21 ♜fb1 ♜c4 22 ♗d3 ♜a3 23 ♜b3 (again the knight appears to be trapped) 23...b5! 24 ♜xa3 b4 25 ♜b3 ♙a6+ (25...g5 26 ♜a4 gxh4 27 ♜f5 ♙xf5 28 exf5 is equal according to the computer, but our eyes tell us the h8-bishop will never get out) 26 ♗d2? (better was

26 Qe3 Bxc3 27 Δ e2 g5 28 Qf2 f5 with an unclear position) 26... Bxc3+ 27 Kxc3 g5 and White lost a piece in A.Jakab-M.Al Sayed, Budapest 2001.

12... Wb6

Black immediately takes up an active post on the queenside. An alternative is 12... Qd7 13 Wd2 (or 13 a4 Wb6) 13...a4 with the idea of ... Wa5 .



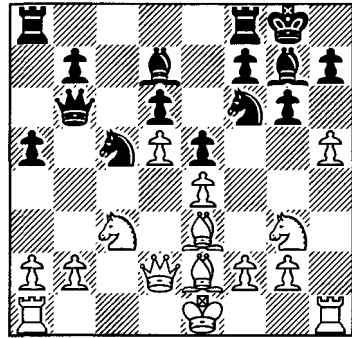
13 Wd2

This is the most natural move. White covers the b2-pawn and may consider Qe3-h6 . Other moves give Black good counterplay:

a) 13 b3 Qd7 14 0-0 $\text{Wb4!?$ 15 Wd2 Kfc8 16 a3 Wb6 17 Kb1 Wd8 18 h6 Qf8 19 Kf1 Δ g4 20 Qxg4 Qxg4 21 b4 axb4 22 axb4 Δ a4 was fine for Black in V.Korchnoi-J.Nunn, Wijk aan Zee 1992.

b) 13 Kb1 Qd7 14 Δ f1 (14 Wd2 transposes to the main line) 14...a4 15 Δ d2 (a much longer route to this square than the classical manoeuvre Δ f3-d2!) 15... Wa5 16 hxg6 hxg6 17 f3 b5 18 a3 Δ h5 and Black had excellent play in C.Lutz-B.Gelfand, Horgen 1994.

13... Qd7



14 Kb1

White has had some success with 14 h6!? Qh8 15 0-0 a4 16 Kac1 Kfc8 (it looks premature to remove the rook from the kingside) 17 f4!? exf4 18 Kxf4 in a couple of correspondence games. Here Black should consider 16... Δ g4!? with interesting play.

14...a4

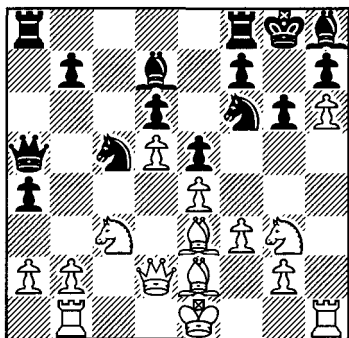
After 14... Δ g4?! 15 Qxg4 Qxg4 16 f3 Qd7 17 Qh6 White has serious attacking chances, but Black could play 14... Kfc8 15 Qh6 Wd8! (shoring up the defence; instead after 15... Kc7 16 Qxg7 Qxg7 17 f4 White has the initiative, and following 17... Δ g4 18 Qxg4 Qxg4 19 fxe5 dxe5 20 Kf4! it had become serious in T.Runting-Z.Nyvit, correspondence 2001) 16 Qxg7 Qxg7 17 f4 exf4 18 Wxf4 We7 with a solid position in T.Runting-Y.Pavlenko, correspondence 2002.

15 f3 Wa5 16 h6

It is interesting how the cramping advance of the h-pawn often turns out to be more dangerous for Black than the opening of the h-file. Instead 16 Qh6 b5 17 hxg6 fxg6 18 Qxg7 Qxg7 19 Wb6+

♖g8 leaves White without any real attacking chances, whereas Black is making progress on the queenside.

16...♗h8



17 ♖f5!?

White changes the nature of the position. After 17 0-0 Black would have good counterplay after 17...b5 or 17...♖fc8.

17...♗xf5 18 exf5 e4!

Black has to open the long diagonal for his bishop.

19 fxg6

Grabbing a pawn with 19 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 20 fxg6 gives Black excellent play after 20...♖fe8.

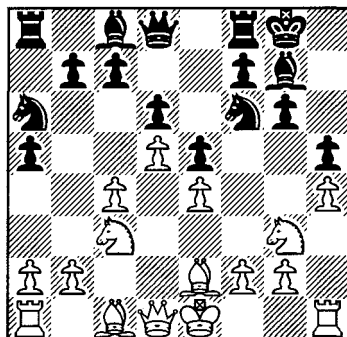
19...fxg6 20 0-0 exf3 21 ♖xf3

This was C.Bauer-J.Degraeve, Marseilles 2001. Now 21...♖fd7 with the idea of ...♗e5 would lead to an interesting position with chances for both sides.

B) 9...h5

This is a very solid move. Black does not have to worry about the opening of the h-file or the cramping advance h5-h6. The advance ...f5 is not so easy to

achieve, however, and Black must watch out for sacrifices on h5.



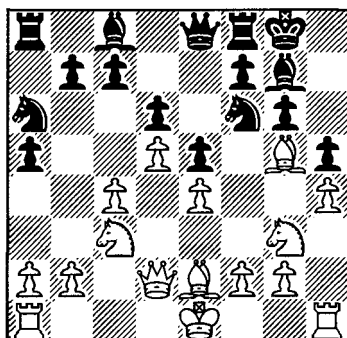
10 ♗g5

White immediately creates the possibility of the aforementioned sacrifice, so Black is wise to unpin immediately.

10...♖e8

Instead the misguided 10...♗c5 allows 11 ♗xh5! gxh5 12 ♗xh5! with good attacking chances, and 10...♗d7 11 ♗xh5! is even worse, as Black cannot even defend himself with ...♗c5-d7.

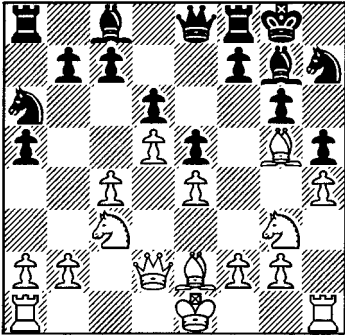
11 ♖d2



11...♖h7

By playing this move Black is able to improve the position of his queen.

11...♖h7 is a strange move which has been played rather frequently. After 12 ♖b5! (simply attacking the a5-pawn) 12...b6 Black's pawn structure loses flexibility. Instead 11...♗d7 12 0-0-0 (or 12 ♗h6 ♗xh6 13 ♖xh6 ♖e7) 12...♗c5 is possible, though.



12 ♗h6

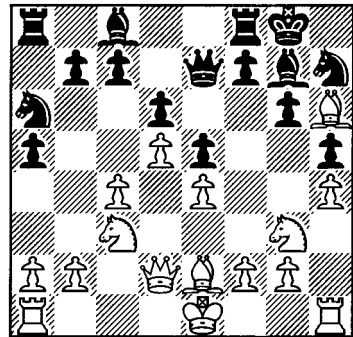
White tries to get closer to Black's king, but from a positional standpoint, Black does not mind the exchange of dark-squared bishops. The sacrifice 12 ♗xh5!? is untried here. The position is unclear after 12...f6!? (or 12...gxf5 13 ♖xh5 ♗h8 14 ♗h6 f5) 13 ♗xg6 ♖xg6 14 ♗e3 ♖g4!?. If White does not want to exchange bishops, he can play 12 ♗e3, although the h4-pawn may become vulnerable. Black has:

a) 12...♗d7 13 a4!? (White intends ♖a3, ♖b5 and ♗h6 with a kingside attack) 13...♖e7 (13...♖d8!?) 14 ♖b5 f5 (instead Gurevich gives 14...♗f6 15 ♖xa5 ♗xh4 16 ♖xc7 as good for White, but 16...♖d8!?) would leave matters looking pretty unclear, while 14...b6!? is also possible: for example, 15 ♖a3 ♗f6 16

♗h6 ♖fc8 17 ♗xh5 gxf5 18 ♖xh5 ♗xh4) 15 exf5 gxf5 16 ♗g5 ♖xg5 17 ♖xg5 ♖xg5 18 hxg5 e4 19 0-0-0 ♗xb5 20 axb5 ♖c5 21 ♖xh5 a4 and Black had decent counterplay in M.Gurevich-F.Nijboer, Netherlands 1992.

b) 12...♖e7 13 0-0-0 (here 13 a4 ♗f6 14 ♗h6 ♖d8 looks insufficient for White) 13...♗d7 14 ♗xh5 gxf5 15 ♖xh5 f5 was unclear after 16 exf5 (or 16 ♖xg7 f4) 16...♗xf5 17 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 18 ♗h6 ♖g4 19 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 in A.Rawlings-A.Schramm, correspondence 2002.

12...♖e7



This is a typical move also seen in the Petrosian Variation when White vacates the h4-d8 diagonal. Black's queen will help contest the dark squares and defend the kingside.

13 ♗xg7

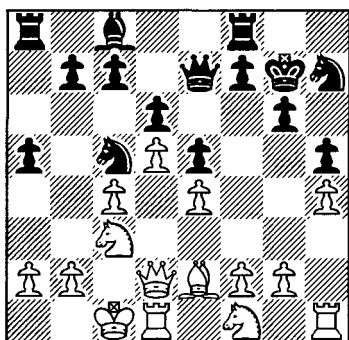
Delaying the exchange brings White no particular advantage:

a) 13 ♖f1 ♗xh6 14 ♖xh6 ♖f6 15 g3 ♖g7 16 ♖xg7+ ♖xg7 is fine for Black: 17 b3 ♗d7 18 a3?! ♖c5 19 ♖d2 was B.Kouatly-R.Gunawan, Thessaloniki Olympiad 1988, and here the immedi-

ate 19...f5 already gives Black the initiative.

b) 13 0-0-0 ♗xh6 14 ♖xh6 ♗f6 15 ♗e3 ♘c5 (Black can also play the immediate 15...♗f4 with equality in M.Freitag-M.Novkovic, Austrian League 2009) 16 f3 ♗f4 and Black headed into a comfortable ending in S.Jeras-I.Drozdov, Ljubljana 1994.

13...♗xg7 14 ♘f1 ♘c5 15 0-0-0



15...f5

This break is quite playable, because Black can reliably recapture on f5 with a piece. There are several playable alternatives too, such as 15...a4, 15...♗d7 and 15...♘f6.

16 exf5 ♖xf5

Or 16...♗xf5 17 ♘e3 ♗d7 with the idea 18 g4 hxg4 19 ♗xg4 ♗xg4 20 ♘xg4 ♖f4!

17 f3 ♖f4 18 ♗e1

Black is also okay after 18 g3 ♖d4 19 ♗e3 ♖xd1+ 20 ♗xd1 a4.

18...♗d7 19 ♗f2 ♗f6 20 ♘d2 e4

Perhaps even 20...♖d4!?

21 g3 exf3 22 ♘xf3

Not 22 gx4?! fxe2 23 ♗xe2 ♗g4.

22...♘e4 23 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 24 ♗d3 ♖e7

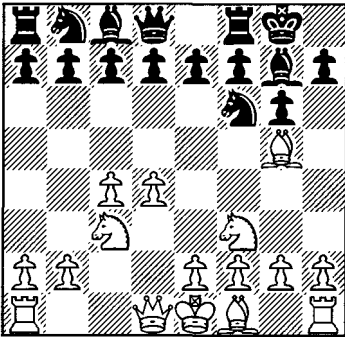
Chances were pretty level here in V.Neverov-S.Vedmediuc, Budva 2009.

Chapter 14

Smyslov Variation

4 ♘f3 ♙g7 5 ♙g5

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♙g7 4 ♘f3 0-0 5 ♙g5

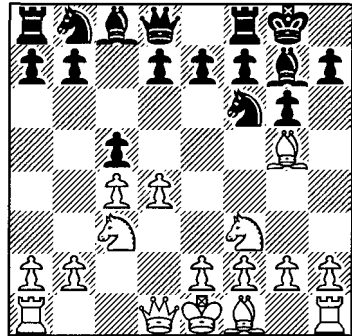


The Smyslov Variation is a quiet system, but it contains quite a bit of venom. If Black does not take this line seriously, it is easy to end up in a position without counterplay.

5...c5

I believe this is the most accurate move. Instead 5...d6 gives White the extra option of 6 ♖d2!? (6 e3 c5 leads to the main lines after 7 ♙e2 h6 or 7 d5 h6) 6...c5 7 d5 and Black cannot play ...h6.

This may not be the end of the world, but better to give *Black* more options, not *White*! Another move order is 5...h6 6 ♙h4 d6, but by playing 5...c5 first, Black gives himself an extra option in Line B – see the note to Black’s 6th move there.



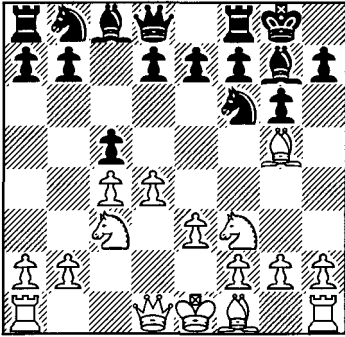
Now White has a distinct choice between two different set-ups:

A: 6 e3

B: 6 d5

In both lines Black will frequently react in a very direct way with ...h6, ...g5 and ...♘h5. Black will generally secure the bishop-pair, but he must be careful to not become too vulnerable on the light squares.

A) 6 e3



White prefers to avoid Benoni structures and maintains the tension.

6...d6

A radical alternative is 6...cxd4!? and now:

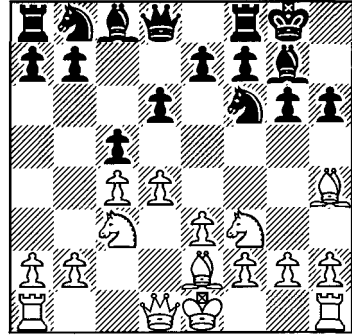
a) 7 exd4 d5! 8 ♙xf6 (8 cxd5 ♘xd5 is fine for Black) 8...exf6 9 ♘xd5 (or 9 cxd5 ♘d7 10 ♙e2 ♘b6 11 ♖b3 a5! 12 a4 ♗d6 13 0-0 ♗b4 with good play for the pawn) 9...♙g4 10 ♙e2 ♘c6 11 0-0 f5 and Black will win back the pawn with an excellent position.

b) 7 ♘xd4 is safer. This is similar to the position with ...h6 thrown in (see the note to Black's 8th move, below), but here Black can try to take advantage of the bishop on g5 with 7...♘c6 (or 7...♗a5 8 ♙h4 ♘e4 9 ♖a4) 8 ♙e2 ♗a5 9 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 10 0-0 ♙g7, with a level position.

7 ♙e2

Instead 7 d5 h6 8 ♙h4 is Line B.

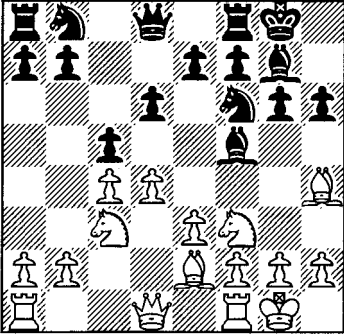
7...h6 8 ♙h4



8...g5

Black plays in the most direct way by going after the white bishop. It is also possible to head for a Maroczy position with 8...cxd4. This is a safe way to play, as he was with 9 ♘xd4 (after 9 exd4 ♘h5!? 10 0-0 g5 11 ♙g3 f5 12 ♘e1 ♘xg3 13 hxg3 e5 Black has decent play) 9...♘c6 10 0-0 ♙d7 11 a3 ♖c8 12 b4 a5 13 ♗b3 g5 14 ♙g3 axb4 (Mikhalevski suggests 14...♗b6 14...♘xd4 15 exd4 ♙e6) 15 axb4 ♗b6 (Black hopes to create counterplay against the b4- and c4-pawns) 16 ♘db5 ♙e6 17 ♗a3 ♘d7 in J.Ehlvest-Y.Shulman, Chicago 2007.

Black's main alternative, however, is 8...♙f5, which was played by Smyslov himself and was Gallagher's favoured recipe. Black takes control of e4 and may play a quick ...♗b6, when White's queenside will be under pressure. After the reply 9 0-0 Black has two main continuations:



a) 9...♗e4 is very direct and has scored well, but I think it is risky. White has:

a1) 10 ♗d3 ♗xc3 11 bxc3 ♗xd3 12 ♗xd3 ♗c6!? (instead 12...♗d7 13 a4!? a5 14 d5 f5 15 ♖ab1 ♖b8 16 ♗d2 ♗e5 17 ♗e2 g5 18 f4!? gxh4 19 fxe5 was J.Ehvest-P.MacIntyre, Sturbridge 2005; here Black should try the disruptive 19...h3!?) 13 ♖ab1 b6 14 d5 ♗a5 15 ♗d2 ♗d7 with a complex strategic game in A.Poluljahov-E.Kengis, Podolsk 1990.

a2) 10 ♗d2!? ♗xc3 (or 10...♗xd2 11 ♗xd2 cxd4 12 exd4 ♗c6 13 d5 ♗d4) 11 bxc3 g5 12 ♗g3 ♗g6 13 h4 was B.Finegold-D.Vigorito, Las Vegas 2006. Here Black should play 13...♗c6 with an unclear position.

a3) 10 ♗xe4 is the main line. White avoids losing time and after 10...♗xe4 he has:

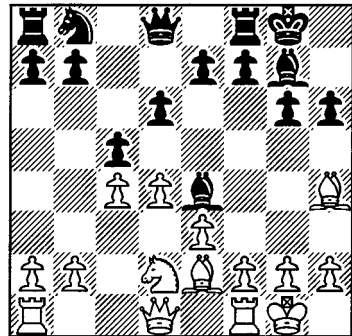
a31) 11 ♗d3 ♗xd3 12 ♗xd3 ♗d7 is level.

a32) 11 ♗b3 ♗c6! 12 ♗d2 ♗f5 13 ♗xb7 (after 13 d5 ♗a5 14 ♗a3 ♗b6 15 e4 ♗d7 a draw was agreed in a complex position in D.Zoler-A.Wojtkiewicz, Graz

1997; instead 15...♗xb2 16 ♗e3! is dangerous for Black) 13...♗d7 and Black will win back the pawn with a good position: for example, 14 ♗f3 ♖b8 15 ♗a6 ♖b6 16 ♗a3 cxd4 and Black was already better in M.Lupu-L.Gantner, Issy les Moulineaux 2008.

a33) 11 ♗d2 g5 12 ♗g3 ♗b6 13 ♖ad1 (after 13 ♖fd1?! ♗c6 14 ♖ac1 ♖ad8 15 b3 ♗xf3 16 ♗xf3 cxd4 17 ♗xc6? dxe3 18 ♗xe3 ♗xe3 19 fxe3 bxc6 Black was up a good pawn in K.Skare-H.Westerinen, Gausdal 1992) 13...♗c6 14 d5 ♗b4 15 a3 ♗a6 16 ♗d3 f5 and Black had good play in A.Haik-H.Westerinen, La Valetta 1980.

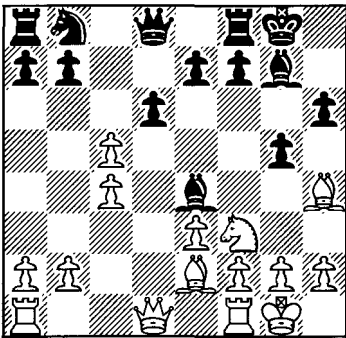
a34) 11 ♗d2 is the most common.



After 11...♗f5 12 e4 (if 12 ♗b3 ♗c6 13 d5 ♗b4 14 a3 ♗a6 Black loses some time, but White has problems with his queenside and 15 ♗c1 ♗b6 16 ♗d1 e6 saw Black taking the initiative in D.Del Rey-L.Gofshtein, Lisbon 1999) 12...♗c8 13 d5 ♗xb2 14 ♖b1 ♗f6 (or 14...♗g7 15 f4 a6 16 ♖b3 b5 17 ♖g3 ♗d7; Black must be better here, but White has some practical chances and managed to win

in C.Horvath-V.Rajlich, Budapest 2002) 15 ♖g3 e5 16 dxe6 ♖xe6 (after 16...fxe6 17 e5 ♖xe5 18 ♖xe5 dxe5 19 ♖f3 ♖c7 20 ♖e4 ♖g7 21 ♖b3?! ♖c6 22 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 23 ♖e2 b6 24 ♖xe5+ ♖h7 Black had counterplay in M.Gurevich-M.Solleveld, Amsterdam 2002, but 21 ♖f3!? looks good for White) 17 ♖b3 (17 ♖xb7 ♖c6 is okay for Black) 17...♖e7 18 ♖c1 ♖d7 (18...♖c6 19 ♖d1 b6 20 e5) 19 ♖d1 was E.Magerramov-L.Gofshtein, Montpellier 1998, and now 19...b6 20 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 21 ♖xd6 ♖e7 looks level.

a35) The rare move 11 dxc5!? appears to be dangerous. At the very least, it is critical. After 11...g5 (Black must throw this move in, as 11...dxc5 12 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 13 ♖xe7 leaves him without much for the pawn after 13...♖c8 14 ♖d2 ♖f5 15 g4! ♖e6 16 ♖ab1 or 13...♖e8 14 ♖xc5 ♖xb2 15 ♖ad1) White has:

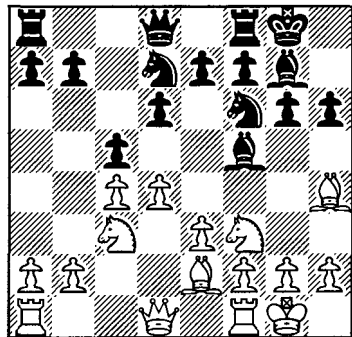


a351) 12 ♖g3 dxc5 is very nice for Black, as White's queenside is under pressure.

a352) 12 ♖xg5! hxg5 13 ♖xg5 ♖f5?! (better is 13...♖g6 14 ♖d3 dxc5 15 ♖xg6 fxg6 16 ♖g4, although White has de-

cent compensation for the piece) 14 ♖d3! gives White the initiative: for example, 14...e6 (or 14...♖d7 15 ♖c2! ♖xd3 16 ♖xd3 ♖d8 17 ♖h7+ ♖f8 18 ♖ad1) 15 f4 ♖d7 and now rather than 16 cxd6 ♖b6 which gave Black some counterplay in M. Bosboom-E.Van den Doel, Wijk aan Zee 1998, White could play 16 ♖xf5 exf5 17 cxd6 which looks very dangerous for Black. If 17...♖b6 18 ♖d3 ♖xb2?! 19 ♖xf5 ♖f6 20 e4! wins.

b) 9...♖bd7 is more solid. Instead of rushing to simplify, Black prepares ...♖b6 by avoiding any ♖xf6 and ♖d5 ideas.



White has:

b1) 10 ♖c1 ♖b6 11 b3 g5 12 ♖g3 ♖e4 is fine for Black.

b2) 10 ♖d2 g5 11 ♖g3 cxd4 12 exd4 ♖b6 13 ♖b3 with an unclear position.

b3) 10 d5 ♖b6 11 ♖a4 (Black is also very comfortable after 11 ♖d2 g5 12 ♖g3 ♖e4 13 ♖xe4 ♖xe4) 11...♖a5 12 ♖d2 ♖b6! 13 ♖c3 ♖b4 14 ♖b3? (14 e4 ♖xb2 15 exf5 ♖xc3 16 fxg6 fxg6 17 ♖b1 gives White some compensation) 14...♖bxd5! 15 cxd5 ♖xh4 and Black was up a good

pawn in L.Pachman-V.Smyslov, Amsterdam 1994.

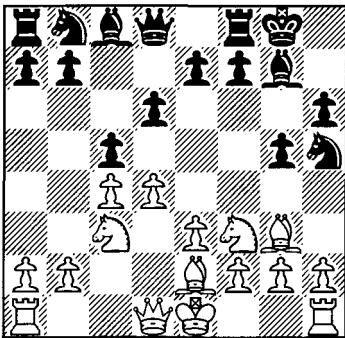
b4) 10 $\text{h}3$ $\text{g}5$ 11 $\text{g}3$ $\text{c}e4$ and then:

b41) 12 $\text{c}e4$ $\text{c}xe4$ 13 $\text{d}3$ $\text{c}f6$ (13... $\text{c}xd3$ 14 $\text{c}xd3$ looks a bit better for White) 14 dxc5 dxc5 15 $\text{c}e5$ $\text{c}xd3$ 16 $\text{c}xd3$ $\text{c}e4$ 17 $\text{c}h2$ was V.Beim-V.Dimitrov, Tivat 1995. Here the simple 17... $\text{b}6$ looks fine.

b42) 12 $\text{d}3$? $\text{c}xc3$ 13 bxc3 $\text{c}xd3$ 14 $\text{c}xd3$ $\text{f}5$ 15 $\text{c}d2$ (15 $\text{c}ab1$? makes sense with Black's knight committed to d7) 15... $\text{e}5$ 16 $\text{f}3$ $\text{c}f7$ 17 $\text{c}f2$ $\text{c}f6$ 18 $\text{c}b3$ $\text{b}6$ with a complex but level position in G.Vescovi-L.Valdes, Morelia 2008.

Now we return to 8... $\text{g}5$:

9 $\text{g}3$ $\text{c}h5$



10 dxc5

White can also play 10 $\text{d}5$, which transposes to note 'a' to White's 10th move in Line B. The alternatives are not very dangerous:

a) 10 $\text{c}c2$?! does not lose a pawn, but Black can seize the initiative with 10... $\text{g}4$ 11 $\text{c}h4$ cxd4 12 exd4 $\text{c}c6$! (not 12... $\text{c}xd4$? 13 $\text{c}f5$!) 13 $\text{d}5$ $\text{c}d4$ 14 $\text{c}d2$ $\text{e}5$! 15 dxe6 $\text{c}xe6$ was V.Smyslov-M.Tal,

USSR Championship, Moscow 1973. Black is the better developed, the $\text{c}4$ -pawn is weak and the $\text{h}4$ -knight is out of play.

b) 10 $\text{c}d2$ $\text{f}5$ (or 10... $\text{g}4$ 11 $\text{c}h4$ cxd4 12 exd4 $\text{c}c6$ 13 $\text{d}5$ $\text{c}d4$) 11 dxc5 $\text{c}xg3$ 12 hxg3 dxc5 13 0-0-0 $\text{c}d2$ + 14 $\text{c}xd2$ $\text{c}c6$ with a comfortable game for Black in A.Haik-W.Lombardy, New York 1984.

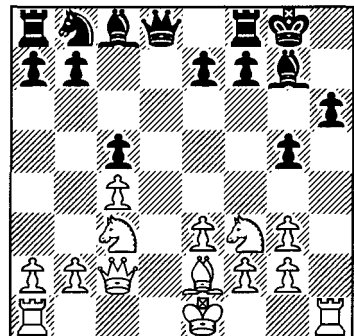
c) 10 0-0 and now:

c1) 10... $\text{g}4$!? 11 $\text{c}e1$ cxd4 12 exd4 $\text{c}xg3$ 13 hxg3 $\text{h}5$ 14 $\text{c}d2$ $\text{c}c6$ 15 $\text{d}5$ $\text{c}d4$ with an unclear position in M.Ivanov-B.Itkis, Moscow 1995.

c2) 10... $\text{c}c6$ 11 dxc5 (better is 11 $\text{d}5$ $\text{c}xg3$ 12 hxg3 transposing to variation 'c3') 11... $\text{c}xg3$ 12 hxg3 dxc5 and Black's bishops give him some advantage.

c3) 10... $\text{c}xg3$ 11 hxg3 $\text{c}c6$ 12 $\text{d}5$ $\text{c}e5$ (if 12... $\text{c}a5$ 13 $\text{c}c2$) 13 $\text{c}xe5$ $\text{c}xe5$ 14 $\text{f}4$ $\text{c}g7$?! 15 fxg5 hxg5 16 $\text{d}3$ $\text{g}4$ 17 $\text{c}f5$ gave White a slight advantage in S.Lputian-B.Asanov, Pavlodar 1982, so Black should prefer 14... $\text{c}f6$ 15 $\text{c}e4$ $\text{c}xb2$ 16 $\text{c}b1$ $\text{c}f6$ with unclear play.

10... $\text{c}xg3$ 11 hxg3 dxc5 12 $\text{c}c2$



12... $\text{e}6$

Black could also play 12...f5!? planning 13 ♖d1 ♜e8 (worse is 13...♜a5 14 ♗d2! ♗c6 15 ♗b3) 14 ♗b5 ♜c6.

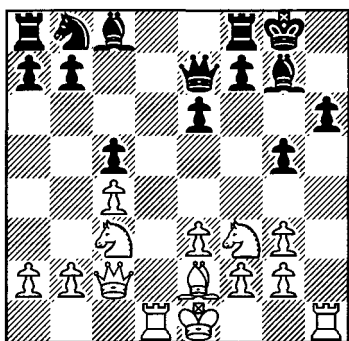
13 ♖d1

This gains time, but White will not have the option of castling queenside. Instead 13 g4 ♗c6 14 a3 f5 (14...a6!?) 15 gxf5 exf5 leads to:

a) 16 ♗d3 ♗e6 17 0-0-0 ♜f6 18 ♗d5 ♗xd5 (Black could also just play 18...♜f7) 19 cxd5 ♗a5 20 g4!? fxg4 21 ♗h2 h5 22 ♗h7+ ♗f7 23 d6 was I.Rajlich-J.Zawadzka, Sroda Wielkopolska 2003. Here 23...♜xb2+!? 24 ♜xb2 ♗xb2+ 25 ♗xb2 ♗e6 would be unclear.

b) 16 ♗d5 ♗e7 17 0-0-0 ♗xd5 18 ♖xd5 ♜e7 19 ♗d3 ♗e6 20 ♗xf5 (M.Gurevich suggested 20 ♖xf5 ♗xf5 21 ♗xf5, but 21...♗xb2+!? looks sufficient for Black after 22 ♗xb2 ♜f6+, 22 ♗b1 ♗g7 or 22 ♜xb2 ♖xf5 23 ♖xh6 ♜g7) 20...♗xd5 21 cxd5 ♖f6 (again 21...♗xb2+!? was possible) 22 e4 ♖af8 23 g4 ♖b6! 24 b3 c4! 25 b4 ♜c7 and Black was taking over the initiative in L.Zaitseva-A.Poluljahov, Moscow 1992.

13...♜e7



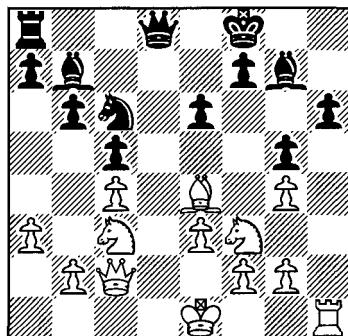
14 g4

Other moves do not trouble Black either: 14 ♗e4 f5 15 ♗d6 is very slow and Black is doing well after 15...♗c6 16 0-0 ♖d8. Also harmless is 14 0-0 ♗c6 15 ♖d2 ♗d7 16 ♖fd1 ♖fd8 with equality.

14...♗c6 15 a3 b6

This is very solid, but another idea is 15...f5!? 16 gxf5 exf5 17 ♗d5 ♜f7 18 ♗d3 ♗e6 19 g4 ♖ae8 with sharp play that that looks rather good for Black.

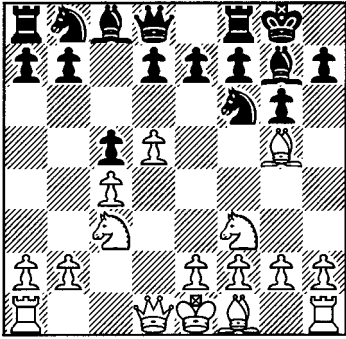
16 ♗d3 ♖d8 17 ♗h7+ ♗f8 18 ♖xd8+ ♜xd8 19 ♗e4 ♗b7



Black has no problems at all and may look forward to putting the bishop-pair to good use. After 20 0-0 ♜e7 21 ♖d1 ♖d8 22 ♖xd8+ ♜xd8 23 ♗d2 ♜d7 24 ♗db1 ♗e7 25 ♜d1 ♜xd1+ 26 ♗xd1 ♗d6 Black tried for a long time to make something of the bishops before finally acquiescing to a draw against his higher rated opponent in J.Lechtynsky-K.Znamenacek, Czech League 2002.

B) 6 d5

This is certainly a more critical continuation.



6...h6

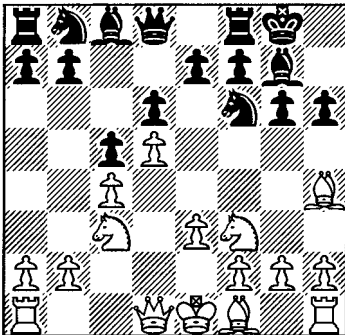
Again, 6...d6 allows White the possibility of 7 ♗d2!?

7 ♙h4

Instead 7 ♙f4 d6 8 e4 e6 9 dxe6 ♙xe6 10 ♙xd6 ♞e8 11 ♙e2 suddenly transposes to the Averbakh Variation! If Black wishes to avoid this variation (Line B22 of Chapter 8), I would suggest employing the move order 5...h6 6 ♙h4 c5.

7...d6 8 e3

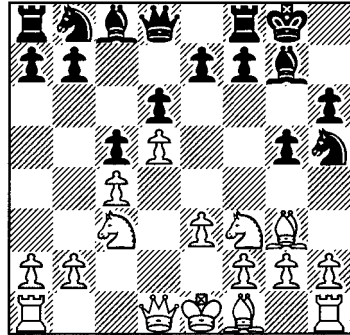
Instead 8 e4 is Line E2 in Chapter 15, while 8 ♘d2 g5 9 ♙g3 ♘h5 8 e3 transposes to note 'c' to White's 10th move, below.



8...g5

Many moves have been tried here, but this is the most consistent. After 8...e5 9 ♘d2 White is a little better in a blocked position, while 8...e6 9 ♘d2 exd5 10 cxd5 leaves Black without the possibility of playing ...♘h5. Black can also aim for a Benko position with 8...b5 9 cxb5 a6 10 ♘d2 or 8...a6.

9 ♙g3 ♘h5



10 ♙d3

This is the most common, but other moves are possible as well:

a) 10 ♙e2 looks less active, but it is not completely harmless after 10...f5 11 ♘d2 ♘xg3 12 hxg3 ♘d7 (Black could also consider 12...♘a6 or 12...e6) 13 ♗c2 (instead 13 f4 ♘f6 14 ♗c2 would transpose, but Black could also consider 13...e5 14 dxe6 ♘b6 or even 13...♙xc3 14 bxc3 ♙g7) 13...♘f6 14 f4 and now:

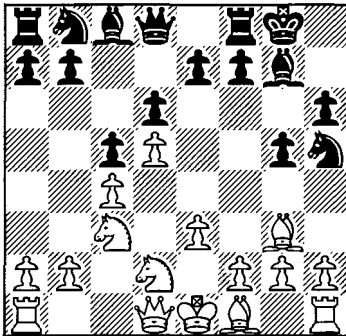
a1) 14...e6 15 fxc3 hxg3 16 dxe6 ♙xe6 and here both 17 0-0 a6 18 g4 (J.Ehlvest-E.Liu, New York 2008) and 17 g4! (V.Akopian-I.Foygel, US Championship, Seattle 2003) give White good attacking chances. We can see that the bishop on e2 can be useful for support-

ing the g2-g4 advance.

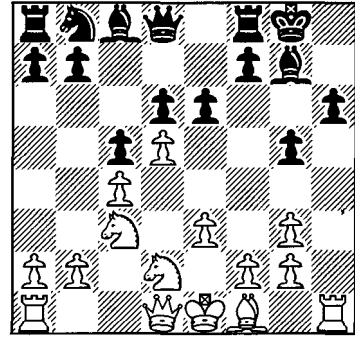
a2) 14...a6!? 15 fxf3 hxg3 16 ♖f3 (here White could consider 16 0-0-0 or 16 g4) 16...♗e8 17 ♔d3 ♖g4 18 ♗d2 ♗g6 19 0-0-0 b5 and Black had good counterplay in D.Rombaldoni-D.Vocaturro, Arvier 2005.

b) 10 ♗c2 f5 11 ♔e2 (if 11 ♔d3 the bishop blocks the d-file and after 11...e5 12 dxe6 ♔xe6 13 ♖d1 ♖c6 14 ♔e2 ♖xg3 15 hxg3 ♗e7 Black was a tempo ahead in M.Gagunashvili-V.Talla, Budva 2009) 11...♖xg3 (the immediate 11...e5 is also possible, but not 11...♖d7? 12 ♖xg5!) 12 hxg3 e5 13 dxe6 ♖c6 14 ♖d1 ♔xe6 15 a3 ♗e7 16 ♖d5 ♗f7 17 ♖d2 ♔xd5 18 cxd5 ♖e5 with a good game for Black in L.Bruzon-W.Arencibia, Santa Clara 2005.

c) 10 ♖d2 is the main alternative.



After 10...♖xg3 11 hxg3, 11...f5 12 ♔d3 transposes to the main line, while 11...♖d7 12 ♗c2 leads to unclear play after either 12...♖e5 (I.Foygel-D.Vigorito, New England 2005) or 12...♖f6 (I.Nikolaidis-I.Smirin, Panormo 2001). Black's main alternative, however, is 11...e6 and then:



c1) 12 ♗c2 exd5 13 ♖xd5 ♔e6 14 ♔e2 ♖c6 15 0-0 a6 16 a3 b5 17 ♖fd1 ♔xd5 18 cxd5 ♖e7 with a comfortable position for Black in V.Gagarin-T.Hillarp Persson, Stockholm 2007.

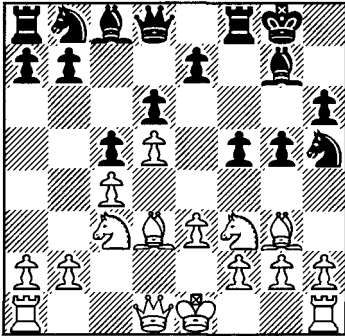
c2) 12 ♔d3 exd5 13 cxd5 ♖d7 14 ♗c2 ♖e5 15 ♔h7+ ♔h8 16 ♔f5 ♗f6 (or 16...c4) 17 ♔xc8 ♖axc8 and Black had good counterplay in V.Dinstuhl-R.Kasimdzhanov, German League 2000.

c3) 12 g4 exd5 13 cxd5 f5 14 gxf5 ♔xf5 15 ♔e2 ♗f6 16 0-0 ♖d7 17 ♖c4 ♖e5 18 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 sees Black's active piece play and bishop-pair give him good chances, and he scored a nice upset in A.Yusupov-G.Souleidis, Essen 2000.

c4) 12 dxe6 ♔xe6 13 ♖de4 was Z.Basagic-D.Sahovic, Pula 1981. Here Black should play 13...♖c6! 14 ♗xd6 (or 14 ♖xd6 ♗b6) 14...♗b6 15 ♗d2 ♖b4! with excellent play for the pawn. Black intends ...♖fd8 with the initiative, and after 16 ♖d5 ♖xd5 17 cxd5 ♔xd5! 18 ♗xd5 ♗b4+! 19 ♗d2 (forced, because White loses after both 19 ♖c3 ♗xb2 and 19 ♖d2 ♖fd8) 19...♗xe4 he is better.

10...f5

This is the most flexible, but there is nothing wrong with 10...♖xg3 11 hxg3 e6 12 ♖c2 exd5 13 cxd5 (or 13 ♖xd5 ♙e6) 13...f5.



11 ♖d2

Others:

a) 11 ♖c2 e5! transposes to Gagunashvili-Talla in note 'b' to White's 10th move.

b) 11 ♖xg5 ♖xg3 12 hxg3 hxg5 (Black could try 12...♖b6!? to play for a win) 13 ♖h5 ♙f6 14 ♖h7+ ♙f7 (Black's queen proves to be vulnerable on d8 after 14...♙f8?? 15 ♖h8+!) 15 ♖h5+ ♙g8 16 ♖h7+ ♙f7 17 ♖h5+ ♙g8 18 ♖h7+ was drawn in N.Pert-P.Smirmov, Aviles 2000.

c) 11 0-0 and now: -

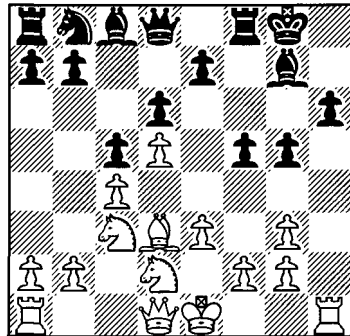
c1) 11...♙xc3!? 12 bxc3 ♖xg3 13 hxg3 e5 14 dxe6 ♙xe6 15 ♙b1 ♖e7 is an interesting suggestion by Andrew Martin.

c2) 11...♖e8!? 12 ♖c2 ♖f7 13 a3 ♖d7 14 ♖d2 ♙xc3?! (giving up this bishop and weakening the kingside is too much to secure a knight on e5, so Black should

try 14...♖e5 or 14...♖xg3 15 hxg3 ♖e5) 15 ♖xc3 f4 16 exf4 gxf4 17 ♙h4 ♖e5 18 f3 and White was much better in A.Rustemov-C.Barrero Garcia, Seville 2002.

c3) 11...e5 12 dxe6 ♙xe6 13 ♙b1 (13 ♙xd6!? ♖xd6 14 ♙xf5 ♖d7 15 ♙xe6+ ♖xe6 16 ♖xg5 hxg5 17 ♖xh5 is unclear) 13...♖c6 14 ♖d5 ♖xg3 15 hxg3 ♖e7 16 e4 was J.Speelman-I.Nataf, Esbjerg 2001. Here Black's simplest is 16...♖xd5 17 exd5 (after 17 cxd5 both 17...♙d7 and 17...♙f7!? look good) 17...♙d7 with a good position.

11...♖xg3 12 hxg3



12...♖d7!?

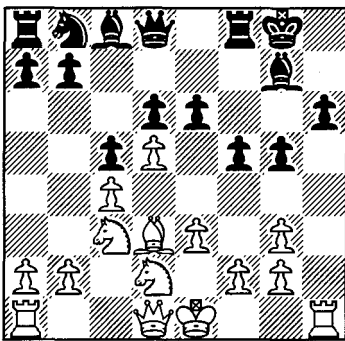
This simple developing move looks best to me. Other moves give White a better chance of fighting for the initiative:

a) 12...♖a6 13 e4 e6 14 dxe6 (Krasenkow suggests the simple 14 0-0) 14...♖b4! 15 ♙b1 f4 16 gxf4 gxf4 17 e5! (White must liberate his pieces) 17...♙xe6 18 ♙e4 (18 ♖ce4!?) 18...♖d7 with an unclear position in G.Sargissian-E.Inarkiev, Kemer 2007, while Bolo-

gan suggests just taking the pawn with 18...dxe5.

b) 12...e5?! allows White to implement a typical strategic idea with 13 g4! (White can also play 13 e4 f4 14 gxf4 exf4 15 e5 dxe5 16 dde4 with excellent compensation for the pawn) 13...e4 (or 13...fxg4 14 dde4) 14 e2c2 fxg4 15 ddx4 when his grip on the e4-square gave him a nice advantage in I.Sokolov-T.Radjabov, Sarajevo 2002.

c) 12...e6 is Black's main move.



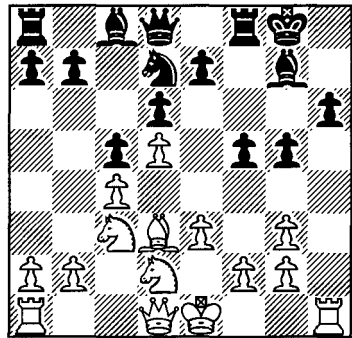
White has:

c1) 13 Wh5 is a bit of a shot in the dark: 13...exd5 (or 13...dd7 with the idea of ...df6) 14 cxd5 dd7 15 dc4 We7 16 g4 de5 17 dxe5 Wxe5 18 gxf5 exf5 19 exf5 Wxf5 with an excellent position for Black in J.Andersen-A.Poluljahov, Gausdal 1994.

c2) 13 Wc2 da6 (from here the knight threatens to go to b4, and from c7 it covers the important e6-, d5-, and b5- squares) 14 a3 dc7 15 0-0 Bb8 (15...exd5 16 cxd5 b5 was suggested by Golubev; if 17 dxnb5 dxb5 18 exnb5 Bb8) 16 dxe6 ex6 17 Aad1 Wf6 18 e4

f4 19 e5!? dxe5 20 exh7+ gh8 21 dde4 Wf7! (21...We7 22 dd5!?) 22 dxc5 eg4 with unclear play in Z.Efimenko-D.Reinderman, Wijk aan Zee 2009.

c3) 13 g4!? is very dangerous: 13...fxg4 14 Wxg4 exd5 15 Wh5 dd7 (15...d4 16 Wg6! dxc3 17 Bxh6 cxd2+ 18 e2! is too dangerous) was D.Khismatullin-A.Volokitin, Moscow 2008, and now 16 Wg6! de5 (16...df6? 17 dxd5 gives White a crushing attack) 17 Wh7+ gf7 18 dxd5 dxd3+ 19 Wxd3 would give White a noticeable advantage.



13 df3

White wants to prevent ...de5 without committing his pawn structure. A couple of other moves have been played with success, but Black can improve:

a) 13 f4!? has only been tried once, but it is very logical. After 13...e6 (Black should try 13...df6!? with the idea of ...dg4) 14 dxe6 db6 15 Wc2 ex6 16 0-0 d5?! (after this Black's position proves to be much looser than White's, so 16...gxf4 17 gxf4 Wf6 was a better try) 17 cxd5 dxd5 18 ec4 xc3 19 bxc3 Wf6 20 Wb3 dc7 21 df3 b5 22 ex6+ dxe6

23 ♗e5 c4 24 ♖xb5 ♜ab8 25 ♖a5 1-0
M.Kazhgaleyev-T.Calistri, French League
2007.

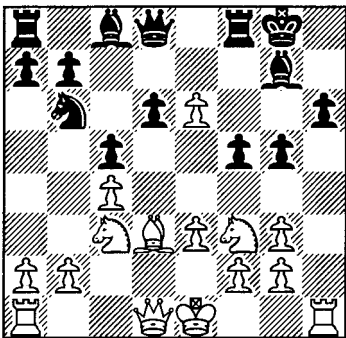
b) 13 ♖c2 ♗e5 14 ♗e2 ♗g4!? (or
simply 14...e6) 15 ♗f3 e5 16 dxe6 ♗xe6
17 ♜d1 a6 18 ♗f1 ♖e7 19 ♗d5 ♗xd5
(not 19...♖f7? 20 ♗xg5! hxg5 21 ♗xg4)
20 ♜xd5 ♖xe3? (Black is okay after
20...♜ae8 with the idea 21 ♜xf5? ♜xf5
22 ♖xf5 ♗xf2!) 21 ♗d3 ♖e7 22 ♗xf5
♗f6 23 ♜d1 ♗d7 24 ♜e1 ♗e5 25 ♗xe5
dxe5 26 ♗e4 with a big advantage for
White in E.Mendez Ataria-G.Llanos,
Buenos Aires 1998.

13...e6!?

I like this idea, though it is not
forced. Black should avoid 13...♗e5 14
♗xe5 dxe5 15 e4 when his dark-squared
bishop is entombed, but 13...♗f6 14 ♖c2
♗g4 looks like a playable alternative.

14 dxe6 ♗b6

Not 14...♗e5? 15 ♗xe5 dxe5
(15...♗xe5 16 ♜xh6) as 16 ♗xf5! is
crushing.

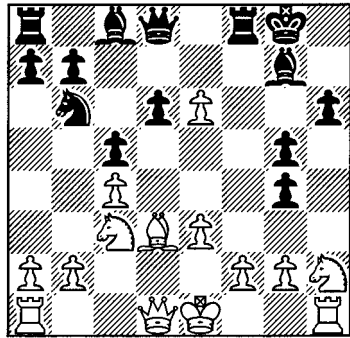


Black is ready to recapture on e6
with a great position, so White must act
immediately.

15 g4!? fxe4

Critical, but Black could also play
15...♗xe6 16 gxf5 ♗xf5 17 ♗xf5 ♜xf5 18
♖c2 and now rather than 18...♖f8?! 19
♗e4! ♗xc4 20 ♗g3 ♜xf3 21 gxf3 ♗xb2
22 ♗f5! with a winning position in
J.Ehlvest-A.Pugachev, St. Petersburg
1994, 18...♖f6, 18...♖d7 and even
18...♗xc3+ 19 ♖xc3 ♖f6 all look playable.

16 ♗h2



16...♗xc3+!

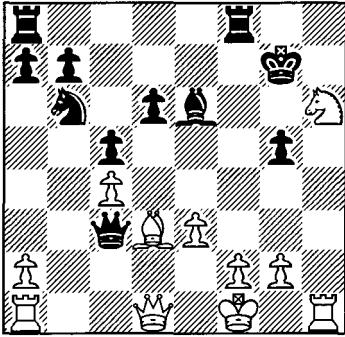
This is stronger than the tempting
16...g3 17 ♗g4 (not 17 fxe4 ♗xe6 18
♗g4 ♗xc3+ 19 bxc3 ♗xg4 20 ♖xg4
♖e7! with a great position for Black)
17...gxf2+ 18 ♗f1 (18 ♗xf2 ♗xe6 is good
for Black) 18...♗xe6 19 ♗xh6+ ♗xh6 20
♜xh6 ♜f6 21 ♖h5 ♜xh6 22 ♖xh6 ♖e7 23
♖g6+ (Huzman points out 23 ♗e4 ♗f5!
with the idea 24 ♗f6+? ♖xf6! 25 ♖xf6
♗xd3+ 26 ♗xf2 ♜f8) 23...♗f8 24 ♖h6+
with a draw according to Huzman, but
the calm 24 b3! allows White to play for
more.

17 bxc3 ♖f6!

Not 17...g3? 18 ♗g4 gxf2+ 19 ♗f1
and White's attack is too strong. Now

the play is forced for both sides.

18 ♖xg4 ♜xc3+ 19 ♔f1 ♙xe6 20 ♖xh6+ ♔g7



21 ♖h5! ♜xd3+

Black should simplify, as his king is in the greater danger. Instead 21...♖xc4 22 ♖xg5+ ♔f6 23 ♖g6+ ♔e7 looks okay, but here the patient 22 ♔g1! is problematic. The alternative is 21...♜f6 22 f4 ♙xc4 when Huzman gave 23 ♖c1 ♖d5! 24 ♔g1 (Black wins after 24 ♜d2 ♖xe3+ 25 ♜xe3 ♜xf4+ 26 ♜xf4 ♙xd3+) 24...♖xe3 25 ♖f5+ ♜xf5 26 ♙xf5 ♖xd1 and Black is clearly better, but instead 23 ♖b1! ♙xd3+ 24 ♜xd3 leaves White with a strong initiative.

22 ♜xd3 ♙xc4 23 ♜xc4 ♖xc4 24 ♖g4

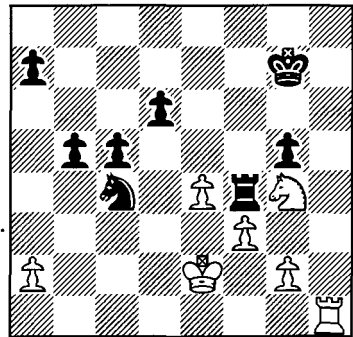
White probably has enough for the pawn, but nothing more than that.

24...♖f5

Black could also try 24...♖d2+ 25 ♔e2 ♖e4 26 ♖ah1 ♔g6!?

25 ♔e2 ♖h8 26 ♖xh8 ♔xh8 27 ♖h1+ ♔g7 28 e4! ♖f4 29 f3 b5

Or 29...♖e5!? when Black can hardly be worse.



30 ♖h5

Now rather than the overambitious 30...♖xg4? of J.Plaskett-M.Hebden, Hastings 1997/98, Black should have settled for a draw with 30...♔g6 31 ♖h6+ ♔g7 32 ♖h5.

Chapter 15

Odds and Ends

1 d4 ♟f3 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♙g7

In this chapter we look at several less common lines. These are not as dangerous as the main systems, but they are not entirely without venom, so Black should know how to react. We examine:

A: 4 ♟f3 0-0 5 ♙f4

B: 4 e4 d6 5 ♙e2 0-0 6 ♙e3

C: 4 e4 d6 5 ♟f3 0-0 6 ♙e3

D: 4 e4 d6 5 ♟f3 0-0 6 ♙g5

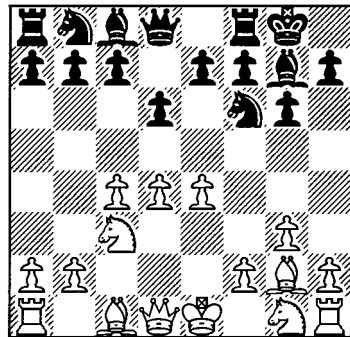
E: 4 e4 d6 5 ♙g5

There are a few other odd systems that deserve a brief mention:

a) 4 g3 0-0 5 ♙g2 d6 6 e3 looks a lot like an English Opening. Black can basically play as he pleases here: 6...♘c6 (playing in 'Panno style'; an alternative is the classical development 6...♗bd7 7 ♘ge2 e5 8 0-0 ♙e8) 7 ♘ge2 ♙d7 8 0-0 ♗b8 8 0-0 ♖c8!? (or 8...a6) 9 ♙e1 a6 10 b3 ♗b8 11 a3 b5 12 cxb5 axb5 13 b4 e5 14 d5 ♘e7 15 ♙b2 ♗d8 16 ♙c1 ♖b7 17

♗b3 c6 and Black had excellent counterplay in R.Wetzell-D.Vigorito, USA 2008.

b) 4 g3 0-0 5 ♙g2 d6 6 e4 is sometimes referred to as the Pomar System.



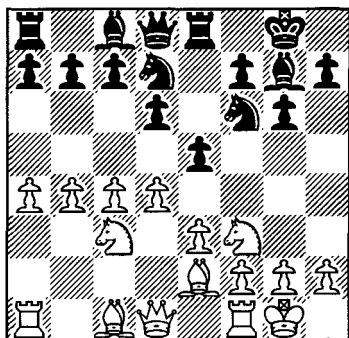
This is not very dangerous, but one of Black's most natural plans looks insufficient:

b1) 6...♘c6 7 ♘ge2 (if 7 d5 ♘a5) 7...e5 (this looks good, but it does not work out well, so Black should consider playing in Panno style with 7...a6!? 8 0-0 ♗b8) 8 d5 ♘d4 9 0-0 c5 10 dxc6 bxc6

(10...♗xe2+ 11 ♖xe2 bxc6 12 ♜d1 also looks better for White) 11 ♗xd4 exd4 12 ♖xd4 ♗g4 13 ♖d2 and I doubt Black has enough for the pawn.

b2) 6...c5! is very logical, as White's set-up is not very threatening against a Benoni structure. After 7 ♗ge2 (or 7 d5 e6 with a good Benoni) 7...♗c6 8 d5 ♗a5 9 b3 a6 Black has a good Panno-type position with counterplay coming against c4. White's e2-knight is poorly placed.

c) 4 ♗f3 0-0 5 e3 is a funny way to play. White is essentially playing the French against the King's Indian Attack – reversed! In general, reversed openings are not that dangerous and in this case White's play is no exception. After 5...d6 6 ♗e2 ♗bd7 7 0-0 e5 8 b4 ♜e8 9 a4 Black has two different approaches:

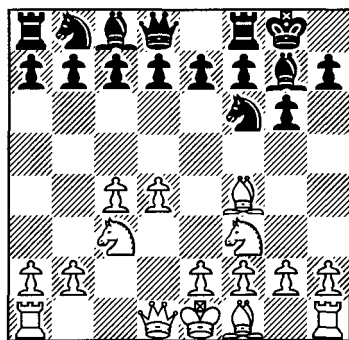


c1) With 9...e4 Black plays for an attack on the kingside in the same way White would in the King's Indian Attack. After 10 ♗d2 ♗f8 11 b5 h5 12 a5 ♗h7 (12...a6 and 12...♗f5 are thematic alternatives) 13 ♗b2 ♗g4 14 d5 ♗g5 15 ♗b3 ♖d7 Black had attacking chances in

O.Orlov-A.Giri, St Petersburg 2007.

c2) 9...exd4 is a simple solution. In the reversed line, White would hardly play this way, as the positions are quite level. Here the tempo is not very important and after 10 exd4 ♗f8 (10...d5 intending 11 ♖b3 a5 or 11 c5 ♗e4 is an alternative) 11 ♜a3 (odd, but White does not have a good way to fight for the initiative) 11...c6 12 d5 a5! 13 bxa5 ♜xa5 Black had no problems in M.Rivas Pastor-A.Karpov, Dos Hermanas 1994.

A) 4 ♗f3 0-0 5 ♗f4



White plays a kind of London System with a pawn on c4.

5...d6

Black could also play 5...c5 6 d5 (6 e3 transposes to the note to Black's 6th move, below) 6...d6 7 e4 e6 8 dxe6 ♗xe6 9 ♗xd6 ♜e8 which is like the Averbakh Variation, but here Black has not played ...h6 (which actually probably favours him).

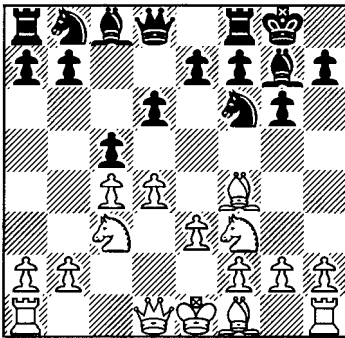
6 e3

White can play 6 h3 immediately too. Black can simply play 6...♗bd7 any-

anyway or try 6...c5 7 e3 (7 d5 b5!? gives Black a good Benko after 8 cxb5 a6 or 8 ♖xb5 ♗e4) 7...cxd4 8 exd4 d5!? with similar play to note 'b' to Black's 6th move.

6...♗bd7

This is a normal, flexible move. Trying to hunt down White's bishop with 6...♗h5 does not work so well after 7 ♖g5 h6 8 ♖h4 g5 9 ♗d2!, but Black does have a major alternative in 6...c5.



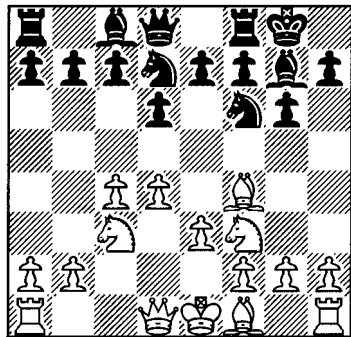
White has three very different ways to play:

a) 7 ♖e2 ♗h5 8 ♖g5 h6 9 ♖h4 g5 10 ♖g3 (now 10 ♗d2 fails to 10...cxd4! 11 exd4 ♗f4) 10...f5 (or 10...cxd4 11 ♗xd4 ♗xg3 12 hxg3 ♗c6) 11 dxc5 ♗xg3 12 hxg3 dxc5 13 ♖c2 ♗c6 14 ♖d1 ♖e8 15 a3 ♖f7 16 0-0 ♖e6 17 ♗d5 ♖ad8 was fairly level in V.Golod-V.Bologan, Romanian Team Championship 1994. The position resembles some of those found in the Smyslov Variation.

b) 7 h3 cxd4 (unclear play results from 7...♖a5 8 ♖d2 cxd4 9 exd4 e5 10 ♖e3 ♗c6 11 d5 ♗e7 12 g4!?) 8 exd4 d5! and now White should probably settle

for 9 ♖e2 (Black is doing well after both 9 c5 b6 10 b4 ♗e4 11 ♖c1 bxc5 12 bxc5 ♗c6 13 ♖b5 ♗xd4! 14 ♗xd4 ♖a5 15 ♖c6 ♗xc3 16 ♖d2 ♖xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♗e4+ 18 ♗d1 ♖a6 and 9 a3 ♗c6 10 c5 ♗e4 11 ♖e2 ♗xd4 12 ♗xd4 e5 13 ♖e3 exd4 14 ♖xd4 ♗xc3 15 bxc3 ♖g5 according to Bologan) 9...♗c6 10 0-0 dxc4 11 ♖xc4 ♗a5 12 ♖e2 ♖e6 with a level position similar to the Tarrasch Defence.

c) 7 d5 ♖b6 (7...♗h5 8 ♖g5 h6 9 ♖h4 g5 again runs into 10 ♗d2) 8 ♖b1 e5 9 ♖g5 (9 dxe6 ♖xe6 10 ♖xd6 ♗c6 gives Black good play) 9...♖f5 10 ♖d3 ♖xd3 (Bologan suggests 10...e4 11 ♖xf6 exf3 12 ♖xg7 fxg2 13 ♖g1 ♖xd3 14 ♖xd3 ♗xg7 15 ♖xg2 ♗d7 16 f4 f5 with a level, though unbalanced position) 11 ♖xd3 ♗bd7 12 ♗d2 ♖ae8 13 a3 a6 14 f3 ♖c7 15 ♖h4 ♗h5 16 g4 e4 was V.Ivanchuk-T.Radjabov, Sochi 2008. Here White should have tried 17 ♗cxe4 f5 18 gxh5 fxe4 19 fxe4 ♗e5 20 ♖e2 when Black has some counterplay, but it is two extra pawns.



7 h3

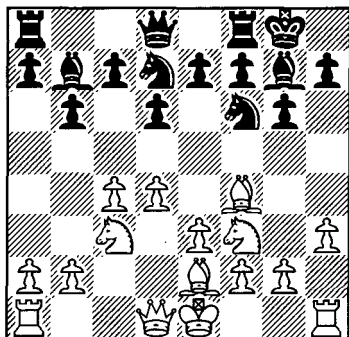
White can try to dispense with this

move, although there is not much reason to. Both sides will have to consider Black's ...d5: for example, 7 e2 b6 8 O-O b7 9 ♖c2 (9 h3) 9...d5 10 g5 h6 11 h4 c5! (it is better to throw this in than to play the immediate 11...g5 12 d2 d6 13 ♗d1!) 12 d5 g5 13 d2 d6 14 ♗d1 gxh4 15 exh5 e6 (or 15...h3) with counterplay.

7...b6!

I like this system very much. Black uses his pieces to fight for the centre. Instead 7...e8 8 e2 e5 9 dxe5 dxe5 fails to 10 dxe5!, while 7...c6 8 e2 e8 9 O-O e5 10 h2 is exactly what White wants – Black does not have realistic attacking chances, whereas White has pressure along the h2-b8 diagonal and can play on the queenside with b4.

8. e2 b7

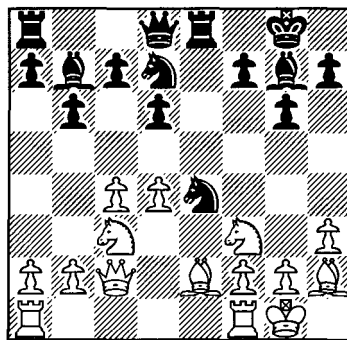


9 0-0

This position could also be reached from a pure London System with 1 d4 d6 2 e4 g6 3 e3 g7 4 d3 d6 5 e2 O-O 6 O-O d5 7 h3 b6 8 c4 (White does not usually go for this move) 8...b7.

If White tries to prevent Black from

controlling the e4-square with 9 ♖c2, Black can play 9...e5! 10 h2 (after 10 dxe5 Black can simply play 10...dxe5 11 g3 ♗e7 or look for more with 10...dxe5: for example, 11 dxe5? dxe5 12 exd5 exg2 and Black is better after 13 g1 exh3 or 13 h2 b7) 10...exd4 (this is good, but Black could also maintain the tension with 10...e7 or 10...e8) 11 exd4 e8 (a little too ambitious was 11...d5 12 cxd5 dxd5 13 O-O! dxc3 14 bxc3 d6 15 a1 and White had the freer game in E.Prié-M.Kazhgaleyev, Asnieres 2006) 12 O-O (after 12 d5 d5 13 O-O Black can play 13...dfe4 or 13...e8!?) 12...e4.



Here White has:

a) 13 d5 d6 14 b4 looked a bit time-consuming in E.Cordova-P.Della Morte, Toluca 2009, and here 14...d7 gives Black a nice position.

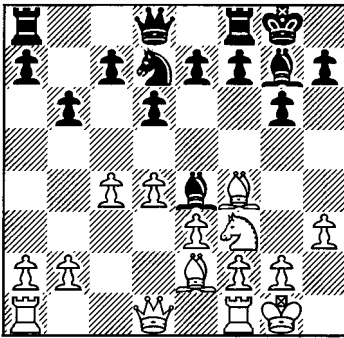
b) 13 fe1 xc3 14 xc3 (14 bxc3 is similar to variation 'c') 14...f6 with a slight advantage for Black according to Prié.

c) 13 ae1 xc3 14 bxc3 d6 15 d2 e6 16 d3 d7 and again Black had a

good position in G.Grigure-J.Tihonov, Solsones 2004.

d) 13 ♖xe4 ♗xe4 (Prié feels that 13...♗xe4! is even better; he gives 14 ♗d2 ♗f6 15 ♔g3 h6 with a slight advantage for Black) 14 ♗d2 ♗f6 (or 14...♗f8!? 15 ♗fe1 ♗f6 16 ♗ad1 ♖e6 17 b3 a5 18 d5 ♖c5 with an excellent position in H.Urday Caceres-G.Hertneck, Port of Spain 1999) 15 ♔f4 and now rather than the passive 15...♗e7 16 ♗fe1 ♗f8 17 ♖g5 with some initiative for White in A.Arab-N.Nyazi, Tripoli 2009, Prié suggests 15...c5! with unclear play. If 16 ♔g5 ♗f5 17 g4 ♗e6 18 d5? ♔xd5!

9...♖e4 10 ♖xe4 ♗xe4



Black has no problems here. Exchanging a set of knights has given him enough room for his pieces, and he can play for ...e5, ...c5 or even ...b5, as we shall see.

11 ♖d2

This move gains time, but the retreat of the knight lessens White's control of the centre. Several other moves are possible, but none are dangerous:

a) 11 ♗c1 e5 12 ♔h2 ♖b7 13 b4 ♗e7

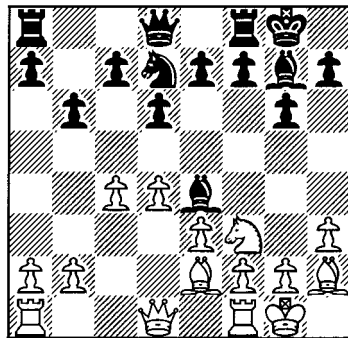
14 ♗c2 c5 15 bxc5 dxc5 16 d5 e4 17 ♖d2 f5 18 ♗ce1 ♔e5 19 ♔xe5 ♖xe5 20 f3 exf3 21 ♖xf3 ♗ae8 22 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 23 ♔d3 ♔c8 24 ♗f2 ♔d7 with level chances in A.Yusupov-K.Grigrorian, Frunze 1979.

b) 11 ♗a4 e5 12 ♔g5 ♗e8 13 ♖d2 ♖b7 14 ♔f3 ♔xf3 15 ♖xf3 h6 16 ♔h4 was A.Sitnikov-A.Kovalev, Alushta 2008. Now 16...exd4! 17 ♖xd4 (or 17 exd4 ♖e5!) 17...♖c5 gives Black a slight initiative.

c) 11 ♗b3 e5 12 ♔g3 ♗e7 13 ♗ac1 ♗ab8!? 14 ♗fd1 a5 with equal chances in N.Zhukova-M.Fominykh, Saint Vincent 2005.

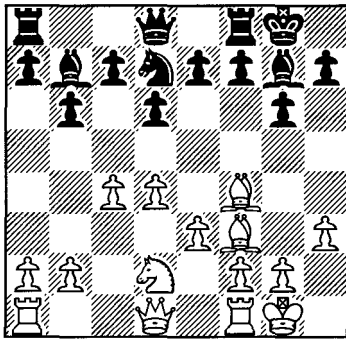
d) 11 ♗d2 e5 12 ♔h2 ♗e7 13 ♗ad1 (similar is 13 ♗fd1 ♗fd8 14 ♗ac1 a5, G.Kamsky-I.Smirin, Khanty Mansiysk 2005) 13...♗fd8 14 ♗c1 a5 15 b3 with a draw in J.Ehlvest-V.Ivanchuk, New Delhi 2000.

e) 11 ♔h2



11...c5!? (Black can also just play 11...e5 when 12 ♗d2 is variation 'd', while 12 d5 12...♔xf3 13 ♔xf3 e4 14 ♔xe4 ♖xb2 15 ♗b1 followed by 15...♔e5 or 15...♔g7 is fine for Black) 12 ♗c1

(Black also had no problems at all after 12 ♖d2 ♜f6 13 ♜fd1 ♖d7 14 ♜ac1 ♖b7 in D.Johansen-R.Kasimdzhanov, Mallorca Olympiad 2004) 12...♜c8 13 a3 ♖c7 14 b4 ♖b7 15 ♖d2 cxd4 16 exd4 e5 17 dxe5 ♜xe5! 18 ♙xe5?! dxe5 and with the bishop-pair, Black was already a little better in G.Kamsky-T.L.Petrosian, Mainz (rapid) 2007.
11...♙b7 12 ♙f3



12...♖c8!?

Black maintains some tension. He could also play 12...♙xf3 13 ♜xf3 e5 (or 13...c5).

13 ♙xb7

White is eager to exchange pieces. Black is doing well in any case, however, as White does not have much to do and Black controls the pawn breaks. A couple of examples:

a) 13 ♜b1 e5 14 dxe5 dxe5 15 ♙g3 ♜e8 16 ♜e4 f5 17 ♜c3 ♙xf3 18 ♖xf3 e4 19 ♖d1 c6 20 ♜e2 ♜c5 and Black certainly had no problems in J.Speelman-O.Romanishin, Sochi 1982.

b) 13 ♖a4 c5 14 ♙xb7 ♖xb7 15 ♜f3 e5 16 dxe5 dxe5 17 ♜ad1 ♜ad8 18 ♙g5

f6 19 ♙h4 e4 20 ♜d2 ♜e5 and Black was already a little better in J.Garcia-K.Zavala Flores, Lima 2004.

13...♖xb7 14 ♖f3 ♜ab8!

Black is not opposed to the exchange of queens. The rook will not be badly placed at all on b7, as Black can consider playing for ...b5.

15 ♙g5 ♜fe8 16 ♖xb7 ♜xb7 17 b3 e5 18 ♜f3

Instead Prié gives 18 d5 h6 19 ♙h4 e4 20 ♜ad1 a5 21 ♙g3 ♜c5 with an advantage for Black.

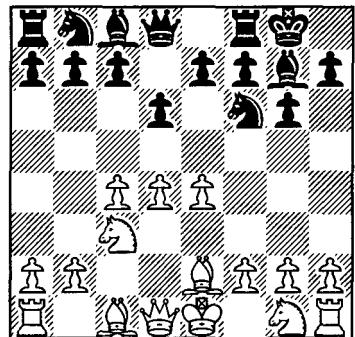
18...h6 19 ♙h4 e4 20 ♜e1

Worse is 20 ♜d2 c5 21 dxc5 ♜xc5 (but not 21...♙xa1?? 22 c6) 22 ♜ad1 ♜d7 23 ♙g3 d5 (Prié).

20...b5!? 21 cxb5 ♜xb5

Black had some initiative in the endgame in E.Prié-M.Vachier Lagrave, French League 2010.

B) 4 e4 d6 5 ♙e2 0-0



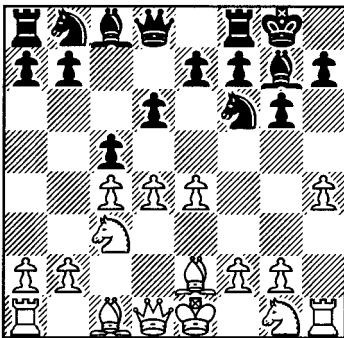
Here White will usually play 6 ♙g5 to reach the Averbakh or else 6 ♜f3 transposing to the Classical variations covered in Volume I.

6 ♖e3

This is a solid way for White to play, but it puts less pressure on Black than the Averbakh. There are a couple of strange alternatives that see White playing for a rather unjustified kingside attack:

a) 6 g4 c5 (White's flailing flank attacks do not work well against a Benoni structure, as Black can easily open up the position) 7 d5 (7 g5 ♖e8 8 d5 transposes) 7...e6 8 g5 ♖e8 (or 8...♖fd7!? 9 dxe6 fxe6 10 ♖xd6 ♖c6 with a big development lead) 9 h4 (White continues his 'attack') 9...exd5 10 cxd5 (White's position looks silly after 10 exd5 ♖c7 11 h5 ♖e8, while after 10 ♖xd5 ♖c6 Black's knight gets to d4 and he can exchange off White's d5-knight with ...♖c7 or ...♖e6) and now Black has a pleasant choice between several moves such as 10...♖e7, 10...a6, 10...♖c7 and 10...f5!?

b) 6 h4 c5



7 d5 e6 (Black could also play a decent Benko with 7...b5 8 cxb5 a6) 8 h5 exd5 9 hxg6 fxg6 10 cxd5 ♖e7 11 ♖g5 ♖bd7 12 ♖g4?! ♖e5 13 ♖xc8 ♖axc8 14

♖f3 ♖f7!? 15 ♖c2 ♖xg5 16 ♖xg5 ♖xd5 (16...♖g4 also looks good) 17 ♖xh7 ♖xc3+ 18 bxc3 ♖f7! (trapping the white knight) 19 0-0-0 (after 19 ♖g5 ♖xg5 20 exd5 ♖xg2 White's position collapses) 19...♖f4 20 ♖d2 c4 21 ♖e3 ♖e5 0-1 S.Williams-J.Gallagher, British League 2001.

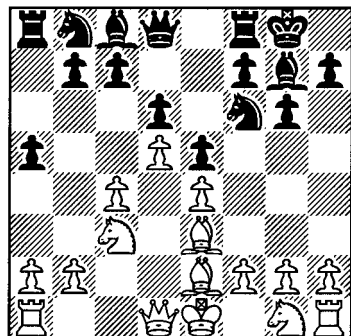
6...e5

Black could also play along the lines of the Averbakh with 6...c5 when both 7 d5 and 7 e5 are possible. The only difference is that Black's pawn is still on h7. Although Black does not control the g5-square, the pawn is not vulnerable as it sometimes is on h6. This is all rather unexplored, so we will look at the classical plan with ...e5, which is more appealing here than in the Averbakh.

7 d5

Instead 7 ♖f3 transposes to the Gligoric Variation, while 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 is clearly harmless.

7...a5



8 g4

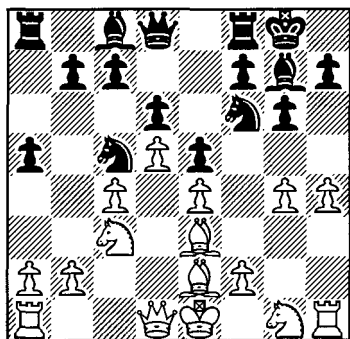
Instead 8 ♖f3 transposes to the Petrosian Variation with 8 ♖e3 which was

covered in Volume I. Playing 8 c5 looks natural, but after 8...♘a6 9 cxd6 cxd6 Black is fine. White is behind in development and 10 ♖f3 will be met with 10...♗g4.

8...♘a6 9 h4

White can also push Black back with 9 g5 ♗d7 10 h4, but Black has counterplay immediately with 10...f5 (10...♗dc5 also looks fine) 11 f3 (or 11 gxf6 ♗xf6 12 h5 gxh5 13 ♗xh5 ♗c5 with unclear play in B.Gulko-I.Caspi, Leon (rapid) 2010) 11...♗dc5 12 ♖h3 c6 (other possibilities are 12...♗d7 and 12...f4!?) 13 ♖f2 cxd5 14 cxd5 ♗d7 15 ♗b5 ♗xb5 16 ♖xb5 a4 17 ♗e2 ♗a5+ 18 ♖c3 a3 by when he held some initiative in M.Rivas Pastor-G.Timoshenko, Collado Villalba 2005.

9...♗c5



10 ♗f3

This move looks a bit awkward, but the alternative 10 f3 lessens the influence of White's light-squared bishop. Black can play 10...h5 (this clarifies the kingside structure, but 10...c6 is also quite playable) 11 g5 ♗fd7 (11...♖h7 has been played more frequently, but there

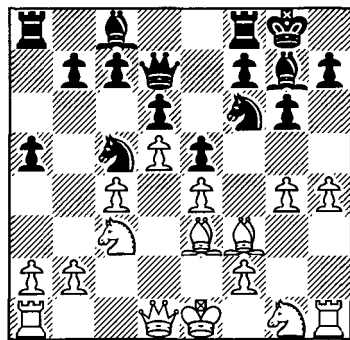
is no reason to put the knight on such a square) 12 ♖h3 ♖b6 13 ♗d2 a4 14 0-0-0 and now rather than 14...♗e7 15 ♖b5! which left Black a little tied up in M.Sadler-M.Apicella, Ostend 1991, Black should first play 14...♗d7! with an excellent position.

10...♗d7!?

Black forces the pace. While this is a strange-looking move, White's 10 ♗f3 was as well and as White cannot defend the g4-pawn, he must advance it. Alternatives are also of interest:

a) 10...♖fd7 is a typical way to coordinate Black's pieces: 11 h5 ♖b6 12 ♗e2 ♗d7 with unclear play. White's kingside pawns are further advanced than they are in similar positions of the Makhogonov Variation, but here his knight is still stuck on g1.

b) 10...c6! 11 g5 ♖fd7 12 ♖ge2?! (critical is 12 dxc6 bxc6 13 ♗xd6, although after 13...♗b6 with the idea of ...♗b4 and ...♗e6 Black's compensation looks pretty good) 12...♖b6! 13 b3 cxd5 14 cxd5 f5 with an excellent position for Black in V.Kiselev-E.Can, Voronezh 2007.



11 g5

White has no choice.

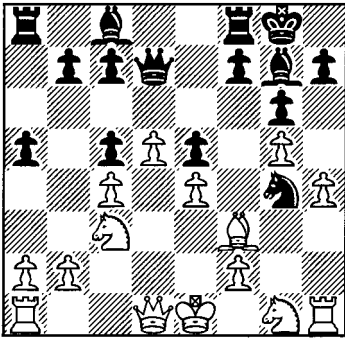
11...g4

Black has an active position, but he must be a bit careful that his knight does not become trapped.

12 xc5

This is the only way for White to justify his play. Instead 12 d2?? d3+ loses on the spot, while 12 c1 f5 allows Black to immediately seize the initiative. Exchanging with 12 xg4 xg4 13 xg4 xg4 14 f3 d7 15 e2 f5 occurred in R.Biolek-S.Firt, Cesko 1999, when the position is about equal, but Black can be happy with his bishop-pair.

12...dxc5



13 a4

White's position looks very strange to me, but this is quite a clever idea to fight for the initiative. Instead the natural 13 h5 is untried. Black should react with 13...f6 or perhaps even 13...a6!?. White has tried a couple of other moves in practice:

a) 13 e2 h5?! 14 g2 f5 15 f3 f4 16 fxg4 hxg4 17 0-0-0 was much better for

White in J.Aguiar Garcia-F.Gimeno Diaz, correspondence 2008. Black can win back the piece with ...f3, but White will just sacrifice back and have an extra pawn and all the play on the kingside. A better try was 13...f6!? with unclear play.

b) 13 g2 looks painfully slow, but White wants to win that knight: 13...f6 14 h3 fxg5 15 f3 f7 16 hxg5 e3 (Black could also play 16...f4!? 17 ce2 xg5 when he has good compensation after 18 xg4 xg4 19 fxg4 xg4 or 18 fxg4 e3; in both cases the e4-pawn is falling) 17 d3 xh3 18 xe3 (forced, because White loses after 18 hxh3 xf3 or 18 xh3 g2+ 19 f2 f4) 18...d7 with an unclear position in R.Bairachny-A.Bakutin, Tula 2000. If 19 xc5 f4.

13...b6

This allows White to execute his idea. I quite like the look of 13...f5!? leaving the c5-pawn to its fate. Black has the bishop-pair and White's development is poor, so it makes sense to open the position. A couple of possibilities:

a) 14 xc5 e7 15 d3 fe4 16 xe4 ef5 gives Black a strong initiative for the pawn: e.g., 17 xf5 (17 e2? is crushed by 17...xe4 18 xe4 xf2! 19 xf2 b4+ 20 f1 xb2) 17...gxf5 with the idea of ...e4 with excellent play.

b) 14 gxf6 xf6 15 xc5 e7 16 d3 (16 a4? b4+) 16...h6 with good counterplay.

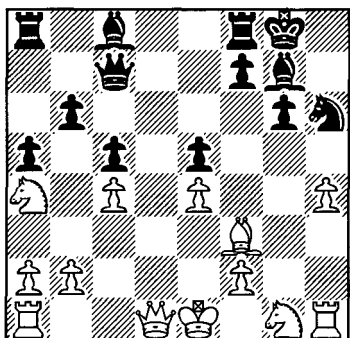
14 d6!?

Instead 14 h5 gxh5 15 xh5 f5 is very messy, but Black's position still looks easier to play.

14...h5

Black cannot take the pawn: 14...cxd6? 15 ♖xb6 is bad and 14...♗xd6? 15 ♗xg4 loses a piece.

15 gxf6 ♜xh6 16 dxc7 ♖xc7



White's enterprising play has allowed him to gain the d5-square for his knight while pushing Black's knight back to h6. Still, White's position has a funny look to it.

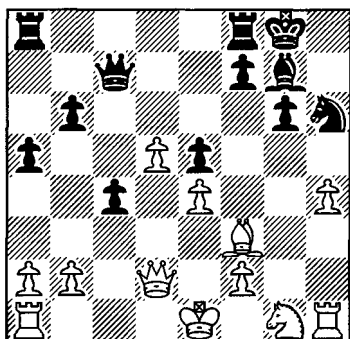
17 ♖c3 ♗e6 18 ♖d5 ♗xd5

This is fine, but Black could also play 18...♗b7.

19 cxd5 c4

Or 19...a4 20 ♗d2 a3 with good play.

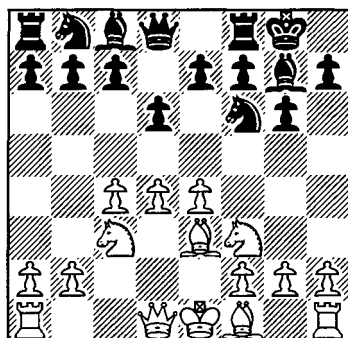
20 ♗d2



Now after 20...♗c5 21 h5! g5 22 ♗xg5 c3 23 b3 (23 ♗c1) 23...f5 24 ♜h3 c2 25 ♗g1 ♗f7 26 ♗xh6 fxe4 27 ♗c6?! (27 ♗c1!) 27...♗c8? (27...♗xc6 28 dxc6 ♗xf3 29 h6 ♗xh3 30 ♗xg7+ ♖f8 is about equal) 28 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 29 ♗c1 ♗xf3 30 ♜g5 ♖h8 31 ♜xf3 (31 ♖e2! looks good for White, as the rook does not have a good place to go) 31...exf3 32 ♗g6 e4 Black created some confusion in S.Williams-G.Jones, Bunratty 2008.

Instead Black had a clever way to activate his knight with 20...♖f5!? with the idea of ...♖d4. If 21 exf5 e4 gives Black good play: for example, 22 ♗xe4 ♗e5 or 22 ♗d1 c3!.

C) 4 e4 d6 5 ♖f3 0-0 6 ♗e3



This move was frequently played by Larsen in the 1970's. Black should be careful to not fall into a variation with which he is unfamiliar.

6...e5

Black should not be provoked into 6...♖g4 7 ♗g5 f6 (or 7...h6 8 ♗h4) 8 ♗h4 when it is not clear what he has achieved. Instead both 6...♖bd7 7 ♗e2

e5 8 0-0 and 6...♖a6 7 ♕e2 e5 8 0-0 allow White to sneakily transpose to lines of the Classical Variation outside our repertoire.

7 dxe5

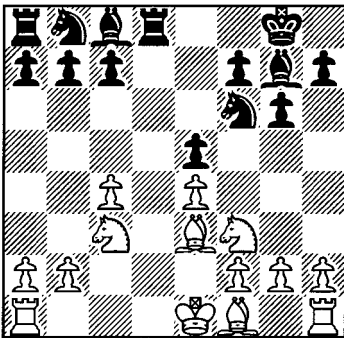
This exchange variation gives the line its original flavour. Instead 7 ♕e2 is the Gligoric Variation, while 7 d5 could be met in a few different ways:

a) 7...♖a6 8 h3 is the Makogonov, but 8 ♕e2 would transpose to a Petrosian Variation outside our repertoire.

b) 7...♗g4 8 ♕g5 f6 9 ♕h4 leads to unexplored play similar to the Gligoric Variation after g5 10 ♕g3 ♗h6 or 9...h5 10 h3 ♗h6 11 ♖d2.

c) 7...a5!? is untried, but will likely lead us back to familiar lines: 8 c5 can be met by 8...♗g4, 8 h3 ♖a6 is the Makogonov and 8 ♕e2 ♗g4 is the Petrosian variation with 8 ♕e3 from Volume I.

7...dxe5 8 ♖xd8 ♗xd8



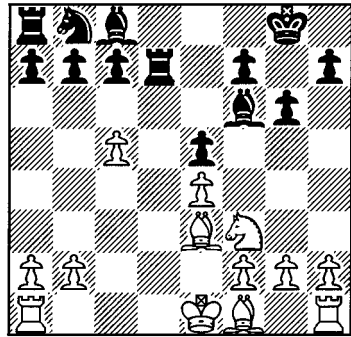
White's hopes for an advantage have been based on this endgame, but Black has more than one good reply. In fact, I think Black has an easier time of it than in the main lines of the classical Ex-

change Variation.

9 ♖d5 ♖a6

This move scores very well for Black. Instead 9...♗xd5 is the most common, but scores badly. After 10 cxd5 c6 11 ♕c4 cxd5 12 ♕xd5 White is better off than in the classical Exchange Variation because his bishops are better placed.

Black does have a decent alternative in the odd-looking 9...♗d7!? 10 ♗xf6+ (10 0-0-0 ♗c6 11 ♗xf6+ ♕xf6 12 ♕e2 ♗xd1+ 13 ♗xd1 ♕g4 is level, while 10 ♕d3 ♖a6 11 ♗xf6+ ♕xf6 12 0-0-0 ♖b4 13 ♕b1 a5 was fine for Black in E.Serrano Salvador-F.Tarrio Ocana, correspondence 2007) 10...♕xf6 11 c5 and now:



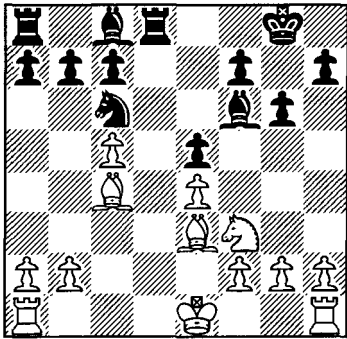
a) 11...♗c6 allows White to double the black pawns, but Black's bishop-pair compensates for this after 12 ♕b5 ♗d8 13 ♕xc6 bxc6 and now:

a1) 14 ♗d1 ♕a6! 15 ♗xd8+ ♗xd8 16 ♗d2 ♕e7 gave Black the more comfortable game in G.Barbero-A.Khalifman, Plovdiv 1986. White cannot castle and it is difficult for him to get his rook into play.

a2) 14 ♖d2 ♜b8 (Black has decent alternatives in 14...♗a6, 14...♗e6 and 14...a5) 15 0-0-0 ♗e6 16 b3 ♗e7 17 ♖b1 f5 18 f3 ♜xd1+ 19 ♗xd1 fxe4 20 fxe4 was drawn in M.Rivas Pastor-A.Lukin, Leningrad 1984.

a3) 14 0-0 ♜b8 15 b3 ♗a6 (15...♜b4! 16 ♖d2 ♗e6 with the idea of ...a5 looks even stronger) 16 ♜fe1 ♗g7 was level in O.Renet-Su.Polgar, Brest 1987.

b) 11...♜d8!? 12 ♗c4 ♖c6 and now:

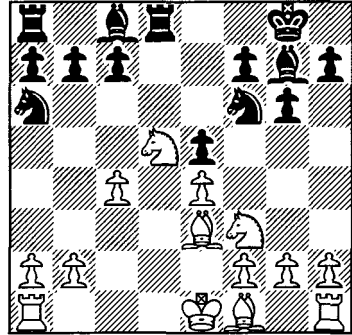


b1) 13 0-0 ♖a5!? 14 ♗e2 ♗e6 with level play in M.Rivas Pastor-L.Christiansen, Linares 1985.

b2) 13 ♗e2 ♗g4 14 ♜hd1 ♖d4+ 15 ♗xd4 exd4 was equal in E.Ermenkov-A.Sznepik, Malta Olympiad 1980.

b3) 13 ♖g5 at least tries to do something: 13...♜xg5 (13...♜f8 is also okay) 14 ♗xg5 ♜d4 15 ♗d5 ♗e6! (instead 15...♖b4 16 ♗e3 ♖c2+ 17 ♗e2 ♜xd5 18 exd5 ♖xa1 19 ♜xa1 gave White some chances in K.Pytel-W.Schmidt, Bagneux 1980) 16 ♗e3?! (better is 16 ♗xc6 bxc6 with dull equality) 16...♗xd5 17 ♗xd4 ♗xe4 18 ♗c3 ♗xg2 19 ♗g1 ♗f3 and with two pawns and a powerful light-

squared bishop, Black has more than enough for the exchange.



10 0-0-0

Instead 10 ♖xf6+ ♗xf6 is even, while 10 ♗g5 ♜d6 11 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 is the same as the Makogonov Exchange, except White is lacking the useful move h2-h3.

White's main alternative to castling is 10 ♜d1!?. This move keeps the f2-pawn protected and intends to create pressure with ♗g5. Black can try to gradually neutralize White play or he can look at different ways to sacrifice the exchange. Some possibilities:

a) 10...♖xd5 11 cxd5 ♖b4 12 ♗c5! a5 13 a3 ♖a6 14 ♗e3 f5 15 ♜c1! gave White pressure in R.Burnett-L.Remlinger, New York 1995.

b) 10...♗e8 11 ♖xf6+ (11 ♗d3!?) 11...♗xf6 12 a3 ♗g4 (this looks like the wrong idea, so 12...b6 should be tried, as in variation 'c') 13 ♗e2 ♖b8 14 ♖g5! ♗xe2 15 ♗xe2 ♖c6 16 ♖f3 ♖d4+ 17 ♗xd4 exd4 18 ♖d3 and White had a nagging edge in R.Cifuentes Parada-A.Blees, Dieren 1987.

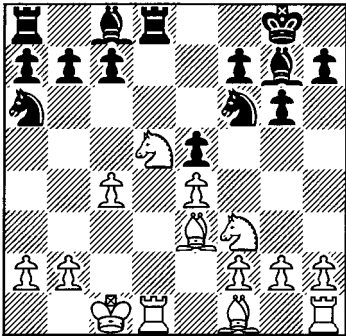
c) 10...♜f8 11 ♖xf6+ (11 ♖e7+!? ♗h8

12 ♖xc8 ♜axc8 13 ♔d3 ♗b4 14 ♔b1 ♗c6 15 ♖e2 looks a bit better for White, as he can contest the d4-square) 11...♙xf6 12 a3 b6 and Black was fine in R.Cifuentes Parada-F.Nijboer, Wijk aan Zee 1991.

d) 10...♙g4!? 11 ♙g5 ♜xd5 (forced) 12 cxd5 ♗xe4 13 ♙e7! and Black never had quite enough compensation in B.Toth-E.Mortensen, Thessaloniki Olympiad 1984.

e) 10...♙e6!? 11 ♙g5 ♙xd5 12 cxd5 ♗c5 13 ♗d2 ♗cxe4!? 14 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 15 ♙xd8 ♜xd8 with reasonable play for the exchange in J.Orzechowski-V.Koziak, Poland 2005.

f) 10...♗d7!? is untried, but 11 ♙g5 ♗xe4 12 ♙xd8 ♜xd8 looks reasonable, as Black has eliminated White's dark-squared bishop.



10...♙e6

Instead 10...♜e8 11 ♗xf6+ ♙xf6 12 c5 ♗b8 13 ♙c4 ♗c6 14 h3 gave White a small advantage in V.Chekhov-Wang Zili, Beijing 1991.

A more ambitious possibility is 10...♙g4 and then:

a) 11 c5? fails to 11...♗xd5 12 exd5 ♗b4 13 ♙c4 b5! when White's position is falling apart: for example, 14 ♔b3 (or 14 ♙xb5 ♗xa2+ 15 ♖b1 ♜ab8 16 ♖xa2 ♜xb5, M.Rivas Pastor-A.Blees, Amsterdam 1986) 14...a5 15 a4 bxa4 16 ♙c4 (if 16 ♙xa4 ♜ab8) was D.Lima-R.Rodriguez, Caldas de Reis 1992. Now 16...e4 17 h3 ♙c8! with ideas like ...♗d3+ or ...♙a6 gives Black an overwhelming position.

b) 11 h3 ♙xf3 12 gxf3 allows Black to equalize simply with 12...c6 13 ♗xf6+ ♙xf6 or keep some tension with 12...♗d7!?

c) 11 ♗xf6+ ♙xf6 12 c5 ♜xd1+ 13 ♖xd1 ♜d8+ 14 ♖c1 ♗b4 15 ♙c4 ♗d3+ 16 ♖c2 (after 16 ♙xd3 ♜xd3 Black's bishops give him the edge) 16...♗f4 17 h3 ♙xf3 18 gxf3 c6 and Black had a comfortable endgame in A.Yusupov-A.Rodriguez, Mexico 1980.

d) 11 ♙g5 ♜d6 (11...♗xe4!?) 12 h3 ♙xf3 13 gxf3 ♗xd5!? (White was a little better after 13...♖f8 14 h4 ♗g8 15 ♙h3 ♙h6 16 ♖c2 ♙xg5 17 hxg5 ♖g7 18 a3 h6 19 gxh6+ ♗xh6 20 b4 c6 21 c5 ♜dd8 22 ♗e3 ♗c7 23 ♗c4 in N.Sulava-M.Muse, Sibenik 2010) 14 cxd5 c6 15 dxc6 ♜xc6+ 16 ♖b1 ♗c5 17 ♙e3 ♜c7 18 ♜c1 ♜ac8 19 h4 b6 with a fairly level ending in L.Van Wely-Ye Jiangchuan, Batumi (rapid) 2001.

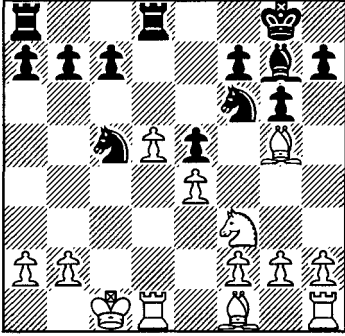
11 ♙g5

White has to try this or else Black has no problems at all, as he didn't have after 11 ♗xf6+ ♙xf6 12 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 13 a3 b6 in B.Larsen-E.Mortensen, Aaland 1989.

11...♗xd5 12 cxd5

Instead 12 exd5 h6 is fine for Black. Still, this was probably a better choice.

12...♗c5



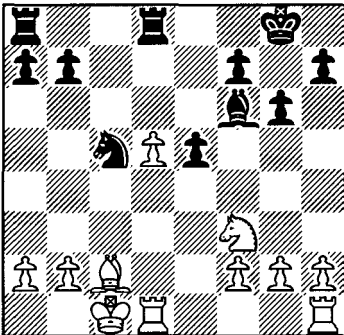
13 ♗d3

After 13 ♗d2? ♗cxe4! 14 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 15 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 White cannot protect f2 and he must watch out for ...♗h6 ideas, so Black will either win back the exchange or win both the f2- and d5-pawns. The safest was 13 ♗xf6 ♗xf6, but then Black is at least equal.

13...c6!

Black seizes the initiative.

14 ♗c2 cxd5 15 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 16 exd5



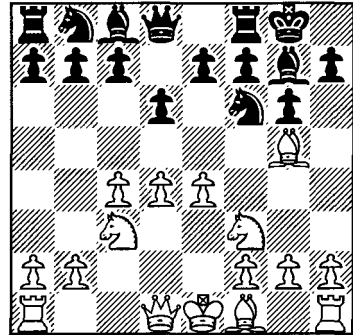
16...e4

This leads to simplification and a quick draw. Black could have played for more with 16...♗ac8!? 17 ♗b1 ♗d6.

17 ♗d2 ♗xd5 18 ♗xe4 ♗xd1+ 19 ♗xd1 ♗xe4 20 ♗xe4 ♗c8+ 21 ♗b1 ♗c7

½-½ L.Van Wely-Z.Efimenko, Moscow 2002.

D) 4 e4 d6 5 ♗f3 0-0 6 ♗g5



6...c5

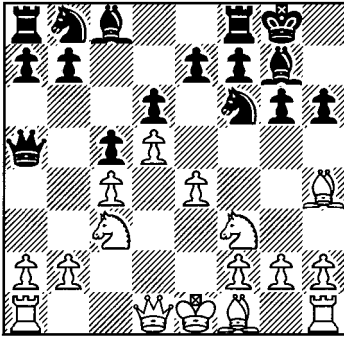
This is the most exact move. Instead 6...h6 7 ♗h4 c5 transposes, but White has the extra option of 7 ♗e3 ♗g4 8 ♗c1 e5 9 d5. After 9...f5 Black is supposed to be okay, but following 10 h3 ♗f6 11 exf5 gxf5 12 ♗e2 I am not entirely convinced. In any case, there is no reason to allow White extra choices.

7 d5 h6 8 ♗h4

If 8 ♗e3 e6, while 8 ♗f4 e6 9 dxe6 ♗xe6 10 ♗xd6 ♗e8 11 ♗e2 transposes to the Averbakh Variation.

8...♗a5!?

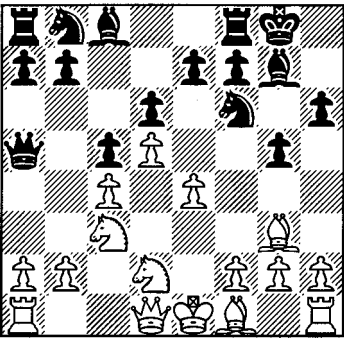
This move is usually correct if White cannot return his dark-squared bishop to the queenside. 8...g5 9 ♗g3 ♗h5 is playable as well.



9 ♖d2

After 9 ♗d2 Black can play 9...g5 10 ♙g3 ♘h5 or even 9...a6 with the idea 10 a4 b5 11 cxb5 ♗b4!. The natural 9 ♙d3 runs into a typical idea: 9...g5 10 ♙g3 ♘xe4! 11 ♙xe4 ♙xc3+ 12 bxc3 ♗xc3+ 13 ♖d2 (if 13 ♖f1 f5) 13...f5 14 ♖c1 ♗g7 15 ♙b1 f4 16 ♗h5 ♖d7! 17 ♖e4 ♖f6 (or 17...♖e5) 18 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 and Black was better in J.Luoma-K.Honkanen, correspondence 1971.

9...g5 10 ♙g3



10...♘xe4!

This idea works because White's g3-bishop will get trapped.

11 ♘dx4

After 11 ♘cxe4 f5 12 h4 (12 ♘c3 transposes to the main line) 12...fxe4 13 hxg5 hxg5 14 ♗h5 ♙f5 15 ♗xg5 ♖a6! with the idea of ...♖b4 gives Black good counterplay.

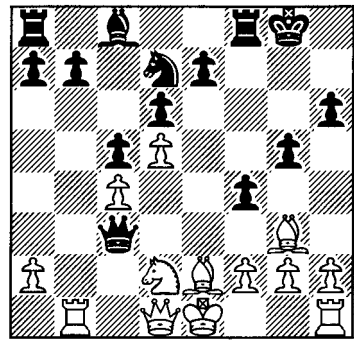
11...f5 12 ♖d2

Here 12 h4 is even worse, because after 12...fxe4 the c3-knight is more vulnerable than the d2-knight in the line above. After 13 ♖c1 g4 Black keeps the h-file closed and remains a pawn up.

12...f4 13 ♙e2

White gets a worse version of the game after 13 ♙d3 ♙xc3 14 bxc3 ♗xc3, as his bishop has to move, while 13 ♗c2 ♙f5 14 ♙d3 ♙xd3 15 ♗xd3 ♖d7 is comfortable for Black.

13...♙xc3 14 bxc3 ♗xc3 15 ♖b1 ♖d7



16 ♖b3 ♗d4!

A clever move to disrupt White's coordination.

17 ♖d3 ♗f6 18 0-0 ♖e5 19 ♖b3 ♗g7

Black keeps the tension for a move, as 19...fxg3 gives White extra options in 20 fxg3 and 20 ♖xg3.

20 ♖f3 fxg3 21 hxg3

White does not really have anything for

his pawn here, but Black must remain resolute.

21...♗g6

Instead 21...♗xf3+ 22 ♔xf3 gives White counterplay on the e-file, but 21...♗f7, 21...♗d7 and 21...♗g4!? are possible improvements, as White cannot easily exchange off Black's knight.

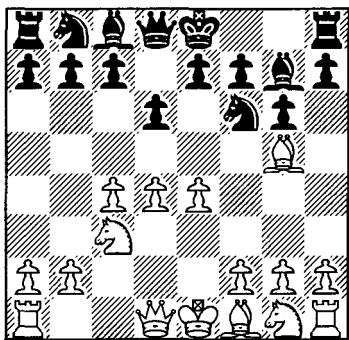
22 ♖d3 b6

After 22...g4 23 ♖xg6 (worse are 23 ♗d2 ♗e5 and 23 ♖c2 ♗f4!) 23...♖xg6 24 ♗h4 ♖f6 25 ♖e2 White creates counterplay on the e-file.

23 ♖e1 ♖f5 24 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 25 ♖e4 ♖af8 26 ♖be3

By now White had managed to obtain enough compensation for the pawn in L.Bruzon Bautista-W.Arencibia Rodriguez, Santa Clara 2005.

E) 4 e4 d6 5 ♖g5



Another ♖g5 system. They all look kind of the same, but they are not! Here Black should immediately question White's bishop.

5...h6

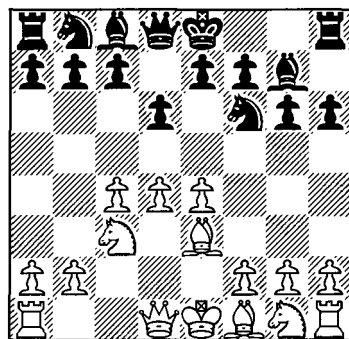
Instead 5...0-0 6 ♖d2 (other moves

will transpose elsewhere) 6...c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♖e2 is an uncomfortable line of the Averbakh. Black could play 5...c5 first, however. After 6 d5 h6 7 ♖f4 (7 ♖e3 ♗g4 8 ♖c1 is Line E1 and 7 ♖h4 is Line E2) 7...0-0 8 ♖e2 we are back in the Averbakh. The text move is more logical, though, as it forces White to declare his intentions first.

E1: 6 ♖e3

E2: 6 ♖h4

E1) 6 ♖e3



This move is not seen very often, but it is probably White's best. This line is a favourite of the Greek Grandmaster Nikolaidis and it has also been played occasionally by Ivan Sokolov.

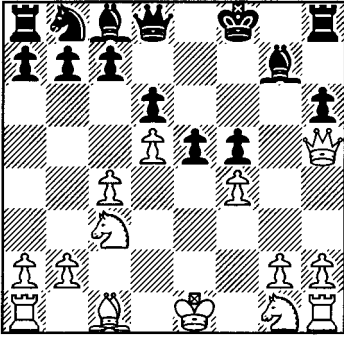
6...♗g4

Black must force the pace, because after 6...0-0 7 f3 the extra move ...h6 will hurt Black, as White will quickly gain a tempo with ♖d2.

7 ♖c1 c5!

This is sharper than 7...e5, which is also very playable. After 8 d5 f5 9 ♖e2

♞f6 10 exf5 gxf5 11 ♙h5+ ♜xh5 12 ♜xh5+ ♜f8 13 f4 Black has:



a) 13...♜e8 14 ♜h3 ♞a6 (14...e4 15 ♞ge2 transposes to variation 'b2') 15 ♞ge2 ♞b4 16 0-0 e4 and now:

a1) 17 ♜b1 ♙d7 18 ♙e3 ♜g8 19 ♙d4 ♜g6 20 ♙xg7+ ♜xg7 21 a3 ♞d3 22 ♞c1 ♞c5 with level chances in L.Psakhis-F.Nijboer, Vlissingen 2000. If 23 b4 ♞a4.

a2) 17 ♙e3 ♜g6 18 ♜ad1 ♞d3 19 ♜d2 ♜g8 20 ♙d4 a6 (20...♙d7? 21 ♞xe4!) 21 ♞d1 ♙xd4+ 22 ♞xd4 ♜f6 23 ♜e3 ♙d7 24 ♞f2 ♞xf2 25 ♜xf2 was more comfortable for White in I.Nikolaidis-J.Netzer, French League 2004, as the knight is stronger than the bishop.

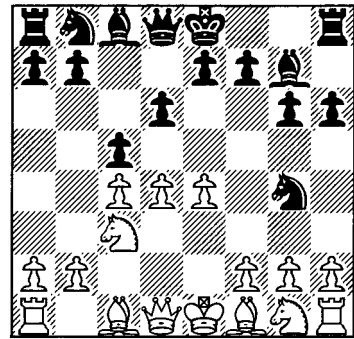
b) 13...e4 14 ♞ge2 ♜e8 and now:

b1) 15 ♜xe8+ ♜xe8 16 ♙e3 ♜g8 17 0-0 ♞a6 18 ♙d4 ♙d7 19 ♜ad1 ♞c5 20 ♜d2 ♜f7 21 ♙xg7 ♜xg7 22 ♞d4 a5 and Black had no problems in the endgame in H.Banikas-A.Fedorov, Dresden 2008.

b2) 15 ♜h3 ♞a6 16 0-0 ♜g6 17 ♙e3 ♜g8 18 ♙d4 was I.Ibragimov-A.Shchekachev, Moscow 1999. Here Black should play 18...♞b4 with unclear play.

b3) 15 ♜h4 ♞a6 16 0-0 ♜g6 17 ♙e3

♜g8 18 ♜f2 was I.Nikolaidis-J.Gallagher, French League 2003. Here Gallagher suggests 18...♞b4 with the idea 19 ♞c1 ♙xc3 20 bxc3 ♜xg2+! 21 ♜xg2 ♜xg2+ 22 ♜xg2 ♞c2 and Black wins back material. White has some compensation for the pawn after 23 ♜f2 ♞xa1 24 ♜g1, but no more than that.



8 d5

White can also head for an unclear ending with 8 dxc5 dxc5 9 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 10 h3 ♙xc3+ 11 bxc3. Black has good long term chances if he can stabilize the position. A couple of examples:

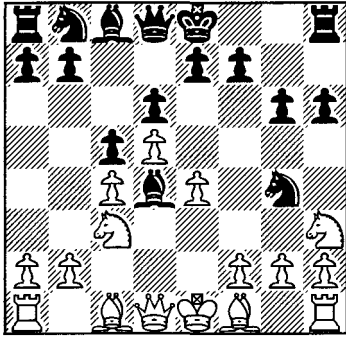
a) 11...♞e5 12 f4 ♞ed7 13 ♙e3 b6 14 0-0-0 ♙b7 15 ♙d3 ♞c6 16 ♞f3 ♜c7 17 f5 g5 18 ♙f2 f6 19 ♙g3+ ♞ce5 20 ♙c2 ♙c6 was fine for Black in B.Kovacevic-M.Mrva, Steinbrunn 2005.

b) 11...♞f6 12 ♙d3 ♞c6 13 f4 e5 (Black could also try 13...♜c7) 14 ♞f3 ♙e6 15 ♙e3 b6?! 16 ♞xe5 ♞xe5 17 fxе5 ♞d7 18 ♙f4 was better for White in I.Sokolov-E.Berg, Malmo 2009, despite the ugly pawns. White later won by playing ♜d1, ♙e2 and ♜d5!. Instead 15...exf4!? looks okay for Black.

8...♗d4!

Black must use his development to throw White off balance.

9 ♖h3



A very unusual position has been reached.

9...♗f6

Black has ideas like ...♗xh3 or ...♗xc3+ followed by ...♗xe4. A decent alternative is 9...e5 10 dxe6 ♗xe6 11 ♗e2 (after 11 ♗b5 ♗c6 Black is the better developed and has good central control) 11...♗h4 12 0-0 ♗c6 13 ♗d5 and:

a) 13...♗xd5!? (perhaps an oversight, as Black loses her queen, but it is not so bad!) 14 g3! (Black is okay after 14 exd5 ♗ce5 15 ♗a4+ ♗f8) 14...♗xh3 15 ♗xg4 ♗xg4 16 ♗xg4 ♗e5 17 ♗e2!? (White gives back some material; instead both 17 ♗f4 g5 18 ♗f6 ♗xc4 19 ♗f5 ♗e6 and 17 ♗d1 ♗xe4 18 ♗e1 f5 are unclear) 17...♗xc4 18 ♗d1 ♗xf1 19 ♗xf1 0-0-0 20 ♗b1 ♗c6 21 a3 h5 22 h3 ♗he8 with unclear play in N.Zhukova-Ju Wenjun Khanty-Mansiysk Olympiad 2010.

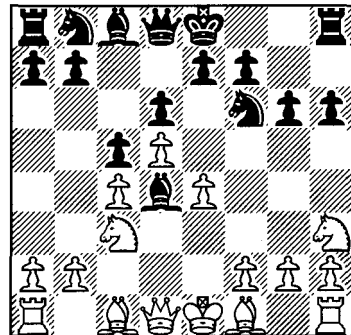
b) 13...0-0!? is an interesting idea. After 14 ♗c7 ♗f6 15 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 Black has

counterplay against e4 and h3.

c) 13...0-0 and now:

c1) 14 ♗df4 ♗ge5 15 ♗xe6 fxe6 16 ♗h1 g5 17 f4 gxf4 18 ♗xf4 ♗df8 19 ♗d2 was I.Sokolov-M.Solleveld, Dutch League 2001. Here Bologan suggests 19...♗hg8 with a good position for Black.

c2) After 14 ♗f4 Bologan points out that White has the initiative with both 14...g5 15 ♗g3 ♗h5 16 ♗b1 and 14...♗f6 15 ♗g3 ♗xe4 16 ♗f3 ♗f5 17 ♗hf4 g5 18 ♗e2 ♗e5 19 ♗e3 ♗g6 20 ♗xc6 bxc6 21 ♗a4. Instead 14...♗ge5!? looks good. Black intends ...♗xh3 or ...f5, and if 15 ♗g3 ♗xe4 Black's knight covers f3.



10 ♗f4

This was the recent choice of Nikolaidis. A couple of other possibilities:

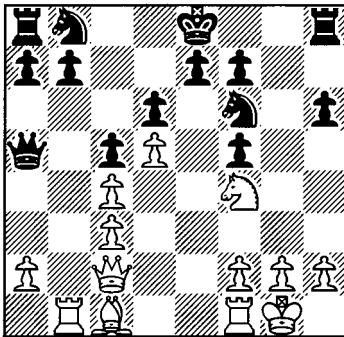
a) 10 f3 ♗xh3 11 gxh3 ♗b6 (or 11...♗xc3+ 12 bxc3 ♗bd7) 12 ♗b5 a6 13 ♗xd4 cxd4 14 b3 e5! with counterplay was given by Bologan.

b) 10 ♗d3 ♗a6 (instead Bologan suggests 10...♗bd7!? 11 f4 ♗b6 12 ♗b5 g5! with unclear play) 11 a3 ♗c7 (11...e5!? was played in I.Nikolaidis-H.Banikas, Athens 1996, and here White could have

could have played 12 dxe6 ♖xe6 13 ♖b5!) 12 ♖e2 e5 13 ♖xd4 cxd4 14 ♖e2 a5 (Black could try 14...g5, although both 15 ♖g1!? and 15 ♖xg5!? hxg5 16 ♖xg5 ♖g8 17 h4 give White interesting play) 15 f4 ♖xh3 16 gxh3 ♖a6 17 0-0 ♖c5 18 ♖f3 ♖cxe4 19 ♖d1 ♖b6?! 20 fxе5 dxe5 21 ♖c2 and Black had problems in I.bragimov-M.Kazhgaleyev, Nice 2000, as he had not been able to stabilize the position.

10...♖xc3+ 11 bxc3 ♖xe4 12 ♖d3 ♖f6 13 ♖c2 ♖a5 14 0-0 ♖f5

Another idea is 14...g5 15 ♖e2 ♖bd7. 15 ♖xf5 gxf5 16 ♖b1



A very complicated position has been reached. White has some compensation for the pawn, but Black has his own trumps as well. A couple of possibilities:

a) 16...♖bd7 17 ♖xb7 ♖b6 18 ♖e1 ♖fd7 19 ♖c7 (19 ♖xd7! ♖xd7 20 ♖h5 with the idea of ♖g7 gives White a dangerous initiative) 19...♖d8 20 ♖b7 ♖a6 21 ♖xf5? (21 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 22 ♖xf5 would be unclear) 21...♖xb7 22 ♖xf7 ♖e5 23 ♖xe5 dxe5 24 ♖g6 (Black is also better after 24 ♖e6+ ♖c8 25 ♖g7 ♖d8

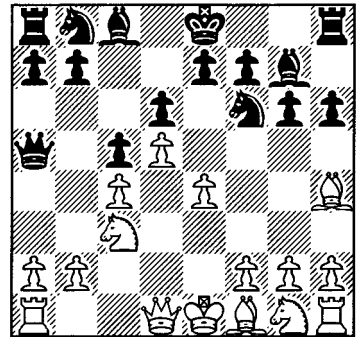
26 ♖xd8 ♖xd8) 24...♖e8 (24...♖xc4! 25 ♖xh8 ♖b1) 25 ♖xe5 ♖d7 26 ♖c6+ ♖c7 and Black pulled off a big upset in I.Nikolaidis-W.Muhren, Leros 2009.

b) 16...♖a6 17 ♖xf5 ♖bd7 18 ♖e1 b6 19 ♖h5 ♖xh5 20 ♖xh5 ♖xc4 21 ♖g5!? ♖e5 22 f4 ♖g6 23 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 24 ♖h4 and here both 24...0-0 and 24...0-0-0 are unclear. A rather unusual circumstance!

E2) 6 ♖h4

This could be considered the main line, but White has not done well because of Black's reply.

6...c5 7 d5 ♖a5



8 ♖d3

The alternative 8 ♖d2 is more solid, but Black has still done well after 8...g5 9 ♖g3 ♖h5 and now:

a) 10 ♖ge2 ♖d7 11 h4 ♖b6! 12 b3 ♖xg3 13 fxg3 ♖d7 and Black had a big advantage in C.Crouch-J.Gallagher, Hove 1997.

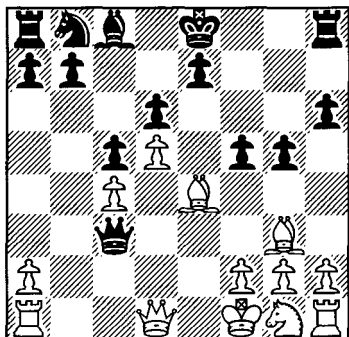
b) 10 ♖d3 ♖d7 11 ♖ge2 ♖e5 12 0-0 ♖xg3 13 ♖xg3 h5 14 ♖e2 g4 with excellent play in N.Dzagnidze-K.Arakhamia-Grant, Rijeka 2010.

c) 10 ♖e2 ♜xg3 11 hxg3 ♘d7 12 ♖c1 a6 13 a3 ♜b8 14 f4 gxf4 (another idea is 14...b5!? 15 fxg5 hxg5 16 ♜xh8+ ♙xh8 17 ♜xg5 ♜f8! with good compensation) 15 gxf4 b5 16 ♜f3 was V.Milov-M.Kazhgaleyev, French League 2002. Here 16...b4 17 ♘d1 ♜a4!? gives Black good play.

8...g5 9 ♖g3 ♜xe4!

This is the same trick we saw in Line D, but here it works even better here as White will not be able to castle.

10 ♖xe4 ♖xc3+ 11 bxc3 ♜xc3+ 12 ♜f1 f5



Black will win back the piece, have the safer king and be a pawn up.

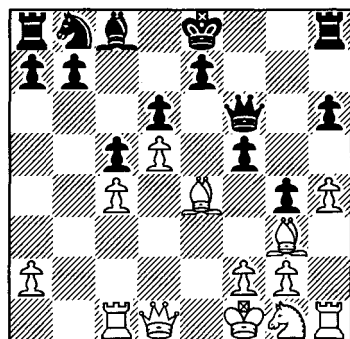
13 ♖c1

Or 13 ♘e2 ♜f6 14 ♖c2 f4 15 h4 ♜f8 16 hxg5 hxg5 17 ♘xf4? (better is 17 ♜e1 when Black can simply take the bishop or play 17...♘d7!? 18 ♖h2 ♘e5 with good play for the piece in J.Le Roux-V.Kotronias, French League 2005) 17...gxf4 18 ♖h2 ♘d7 19 g3 ♘e5 20 ♜h5+ ♘d8 21 gxf4 ♘g4 22 ♜e1 ♜h8 23 ♖h7 ♜g7 0-1 LStein-E.Geller, USSR Team Championship 1966.

13...♜f6 14 h4

Checking does not do much; 14 ♜h5+ ♘d8 leaves Black's king sitting comfortably. After 15 h4 g4! 16 ♖d3 f4 17 ♖xf4 ♜xf4 Black had a big plus in V.Radomsky-G.Timoscenko, Novosibirsk 1976.

14...g4!



15 ♘e2

After 15 ♖d3 f4 16 ♘e2 fxg3 17 ♘xg3 ♜f8 18 ♖c2 ♘d7! Black gives back the pawn to complete his development. A well-known success for Black continued 19 ♜xg4 ♘e5 20 ♜e4 ♖d7 21 ♖g1 0-0-0 with a big advantage in B.Spasky-R.Fischer, 16th matchgame, Belgrade 1992.

15...fxe4 16 ♖g1 ♖f5 17 ♘c3 ♘d7 18 ♜e2 0-0 19 ♘xe4 ♜d4 20 ♘d2 ♜ae8 21 ♘f1

Here 21...♘e5?! was played in V.Milov-J.Gallagher, Las Vegas 2002, when White should probably have tried 22 ♖xe5 ♜xe5 23 ♜xe5 dxe5 24 ♘e3 and it is not easy for Black to make use of his extra pawn. Instead of 21...♘e5?!, Black had several good ways to maintain a large advantage, such as 21...♘f6, 21...♜d3 or 21...e6!?

Index of Variations

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 and now:

A: 3 ♘f3

B: 3 ♘c3

A) 3 ♘f3 ♙g7 4 g3

4 ♘c3 0-0 5 ♙g5 (5 ♙f4 – 344) 5...c5

6 e3 – 332

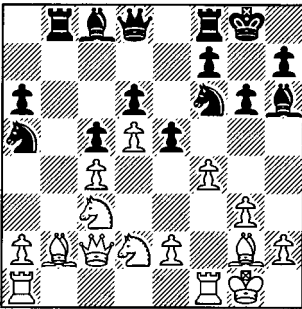
6 d5 – 336

4...0-0 5 ♙g2 d6 6 0-0 ♘c6 7 ♘c3 a6

7...♙b8 – 152

8 h3

8 d5 ♘a5 9 ♘d2 c5 10 ♙c2 (10 ♙b1 – 15) 10...♙b8 11 b3 b5 12 ♙b2 (12 ♙b1 – 20)
12...bxc4 13 bxc4 ♙h6 14 f4 (14 ♘cb1 – 25) 14...e5



15 ♙ae1 – 27

15 ♙ab1 – 29

15 dxe6 – 32

8 b3 ♙b8

Attacking Chess: The King's Indian, Volume 2

9 e3 - 86

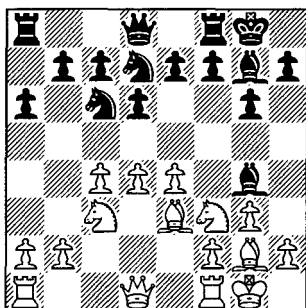
9 ♖b2 - 90

9 ♘d5 - 95

8 ♖d2 - 107

8 e3 - 111

8 e4 ♖g4 9 ♖e3 (9 h3 - 114) 9...♗d7



10 ♕d2 - 118

10 ♘e2 - 123

8 ♖e1 ♖b8 9 ♖b1

9...♗f5 - 128

9...♗a5 - 131

8 ♕d3

8...e5 - 138

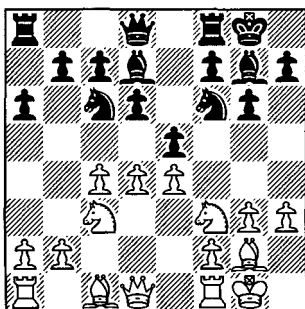
8...♗d7 - 142

8...♗f5 - 146

8...♗d7 - 148

8...♖b8

8...♗d7 9 e4 e5



10 d5 – 72

10 ♖e3 – 76

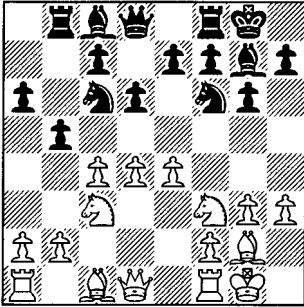
10 dxe5 – 80

9 e4

9 ♖g5 – 64

9 ♖e3 – 66

9...b5



10 e5

10 cxb5 – 43

10...♗d7

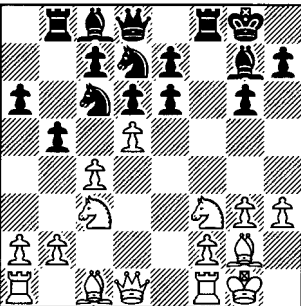
10...dxe5 11 dxe5 ♜xd1 12 ♝xd1 ♘d7 13 e6 fxe6 14 cxb5 axb5

15 ♖e3 – 49; 15 ♖f4 – 50

11 e6

11 cxb5 – 52

11...fxe6 12 d5



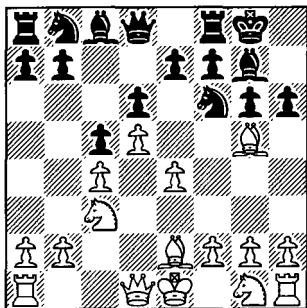
12...exd5 – 57

12...♗ce5 – 59

12...♗a5 – 61

B) 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f4

5 ♗e2 0-0 6 ♗g5 (6 ♗e3 – 348) 6...c5 7 d5 (7 dxc5 – 240) 7...h6 (7...b5 – 243; 7...a6 – 250)



8 ♗e3 e6 9 ♖d2 exd5

10 exd5 – 212

10 cxd5 – 214

8 ♗f4 e6 9 dxe6 ♗xe6 10 ♗xd6 (10 ♖d2 – 219) 10...♞e8

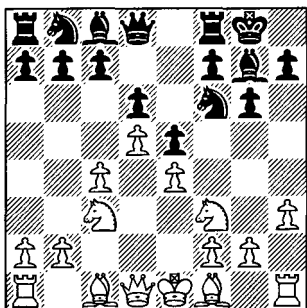
11 ♗xc5 – 227

11 ♘f3

11...♘c6 – 229

11...♞b6 – 234

5 ♘f3 0-0 6 h3 (6 ♗e3 – 352; 6 ♗g5 – 356) 6...e5 7 d5 (7 dxe5 – 257)



7...a5 – 262

7...♘a6 – 267

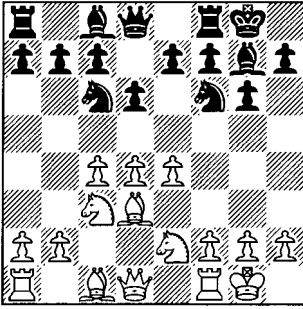
7...♘h5 – 275

5 h3 0-0 6 ♗g5 (6 ♗e3 – 281) 6...♘a6 7 ♗d3 e5 8 d5

8...c6 – 287

8...♞e8 – 289

5 ♖d3 0-0 6 ♗ge2 ♘c6 7 0-0



7...♗d7 – 297

7...♗h5 – 302

7...e5 8 d5 ♗d4 9 ♗xd4 exd4

10 ♗b5 – 314

10 ♗e2 – 317

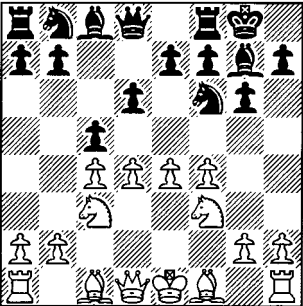
5 ♗ge2 0-0 6 ♗g3 e5 7 d5 a5 8 ♖e2 ♗a6 9 h4

9...c6 – 325

9...h5 – 328

5 ♖g5 – 358

5...0-0 6 ♗f3 c5



7 d5

7 ♖e2 – 177

7 dxc5 – 182

7...e6 8 ♖e2

8 dxe6 – 192

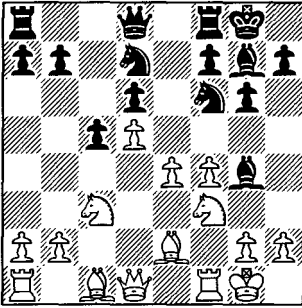
8...exd5 9 cxd5

9 e5 – 199

Attacking Chess: The King's Indian, Volume 2

9 exd5 - 201

9...♙g4 10 0-0 ♖bd7



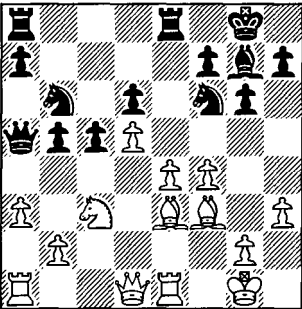
11 ♖e1

11 ♖d2 - 155

11 a4 - 157

11 h3 - 159

11...♜e8 12 h3 ♙xf3 13 ♙xf3 ♚a5 14 ♙e3 b5 15 a3 ♖b6



16 ♙f2 - 167

16 e5 - 169

ATTACKING CHESS THE KING'S INDIAN VOLUME 2

2 free updates
of this book available
within a year of publication at
www.everymanchess.com

The King's Indian remains a hugely popular opening – unsurprising given the attacking opportunities it offers. In many of the ultra-sharp main lines, White wins the queenside battle but this often turns out to be a Pyrrhic victory as Black wins the war by checkmating on the kingside! Black is hunting the enemy king and – in practical play – this gives him a psychological edge.

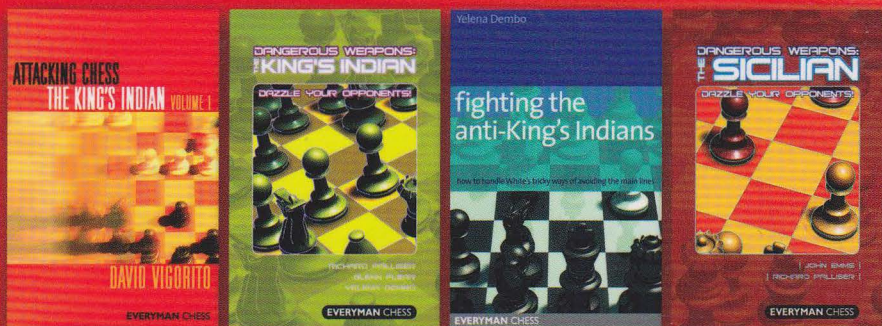
David Vigorito presents an aggressive King's Indian repertoire for Black based on the main lines. Vigorito is renowned for his opening expertise, and his suggested lines are full of innovative ideas. In addition, his lucid explanations of the key plans and tactics will benefit all players. Volume 2 deals with the Four Pawns Attack, the Fianchetto Variation, the Averbakh Variation and many other lines.

ATTACKING CHESS is a brand new series which focuses on traditional attacking openings, as well as creative and aggressive ways to play openings that are not always associated with attacking chess. It provides hard-hitting repertoires and opening weapons designed for players of all levels.

- A King's Indian repertoire for Black
- State-of-the-art coverage of the key lines
- Packed with new ideas and critical analysis

David Vigorito is an International Master from the United States. His previous books have received great praise and he is rapidly becoming one of the world's leading chess writers.

other great titles in the series



EVERYMAN CHESS

www.everymanchess.com

US \$27.95 UK £16.99

ISBN 978-1-85744-664-7



9 781857 446647